DUX BELLORUM

Arthurian Wargaming Rules AD367–793

Daniel Mersey

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CONTENTS

WELCOME TO *DUX BELLORUM* **4**
The golden rule of gaming 5
Why '*Dux Bellorum*'? **5**

UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS **6**
Things you'll need in addition to this book 6
Unit types 6
Unit stats 7
Leaders 9
Sample armies 10
Basing 13
Measuring and Base Widths (BW) 14

PLAYING THE GAME **15**
Getting ready to play 15
Setting out the battlefield 16
Deployment and determining Aggressors and Repellers 18
Groups and Units 18
Turn sequence 18
Allocating LPs 20
Missile fire 22
Movement and Bravery tests 24
Close combat 30
Ending the turn 39
Ending the game: winning and losing 39
Army Lists 42
Strategies and Tactics 50

SCENARIOS **56**
Annals Battle 56
Dawn Attack 56
End of Reign 57
River Battle 58
Village Raid 58
Scenario idea: Sieges 58
Scenario idea: The Bard's Tale 60

ARTWORK REFERENCES **61**

***DUX BELLORUM* QUICK REFERENCE SHEET** **62**

***DUX BELLORUM* ARMY ROSTER** **64**

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WELCOME TO *DUX BELLORUM*

Dux Bellorum is an Arthurian-era Dark Ages miniatures game, set in the period from the mid-4th century AD to the end of the 8th century AD: a time when new kingdoms were forged in the British Isles and a time when battle was commonplace.

Warfare in Britain in this period is characterised by quality of leadership and individual bravery rather than a technological difference in weaponry or a wealth of tactical choices chosen from well-thumbed military manuals. In keeping with this, the rules emphasise the influence an army's commander has on his units, with simple manoeuvre rules and chaotic, deadly close combat. It would also seem at odds with the period's flavour to produce a very technical, data-crunching game, so I've stuck to a straightforward game that I believe represents the British Dark Ages most appropriately. *Dux Bellorum* has been designed very much as a 'game' rather than an attempted in-depth 'simulation' of military conflict, although I hope that the challenges presented to the players replicate the challenges faced in this historical era: inspiring the right troops at the right time, balancing quality versus quantity in your army, and a sprinkling of luck at the right time.

Dux Bellorum uses bases mounted with multiple miniatures as the basic playing pieces; this means that individual casualties are not removed from units and the number of miniatures you own has no bearing on hosting a good game, making the game flexible for players on a variety of budgets. All distances are given in Base Widths, which allows the game to be used within any scale of miniature based in many different ways.

Dux Bellorum armies are selected from Late Roman, Romano-British, Welsh, Saxon, Pictish, Irish, Land Raider, and Sea Raider lists. Choosing the army you wish to model can involve as much or as little research as you like, and selecting which troops you wish to recruit can be a mini-game in itself. Armies usually consist of between 5 and 10 units, depending on the type of troops chosen and extra strategies purchased.

The basics of each part of the battle rules are laid out 'In Brief'; these sections outline the rules in their simplest form, with the accompanying text providing more details. Scattered through the book you'll find some optional rules and playing tips; the optional rules provide a little more depth but have been left out of the basic game to streamline it, and the playing tips offer hints to improve your game play. Optional rules may initially be ignored, but it's worth becoming familiar with the playing tips after you've played the game a couple of times.

Romano-British Companions. 28mm Gripping Beast and Westwind painted by Andy Hawes.

These rules have developed from, but give a very different game to, my original *Glutter of Ravens* game, which was published in 1998 by Outpost Wargame Services; many of the mechanisms in *Dux Bellorum* have their origin in *Glutter of Ravens*, but this game benefits from more than an extra

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decade of gaming experience and eliminates the (paper) record keeping aspect of the original game. The army lists are significantly different, based on extra years of research by myself and other enthusiasts and historians.

I set myself the following ground rules as I developed the game, which I hope shows the design philosophy of *Dux Bellorum*:

- Design a simple non-tournament game where players can concentrate on playing not learning, and gaming for fun.
- Keep the emphasis on 'game' not 'simulation'.
- Present optional rules without cluttering the streamlined basic game.
- Engage players in every phase of the game: give them choices to make.
- Present flexible army lists that reflect my own and other interpretations, whilst retaining the character of each army.
- Represent close combat as a swirling, dangerous mass rather than well-co-ordinated battle lines.
- Differentiate between 'offensive' and 'defensive' foot and allow armies to be foot or mounted, allowing professional soldiers to fight as either.
- Convey the spirit of Dark Ages battle without being too technical.

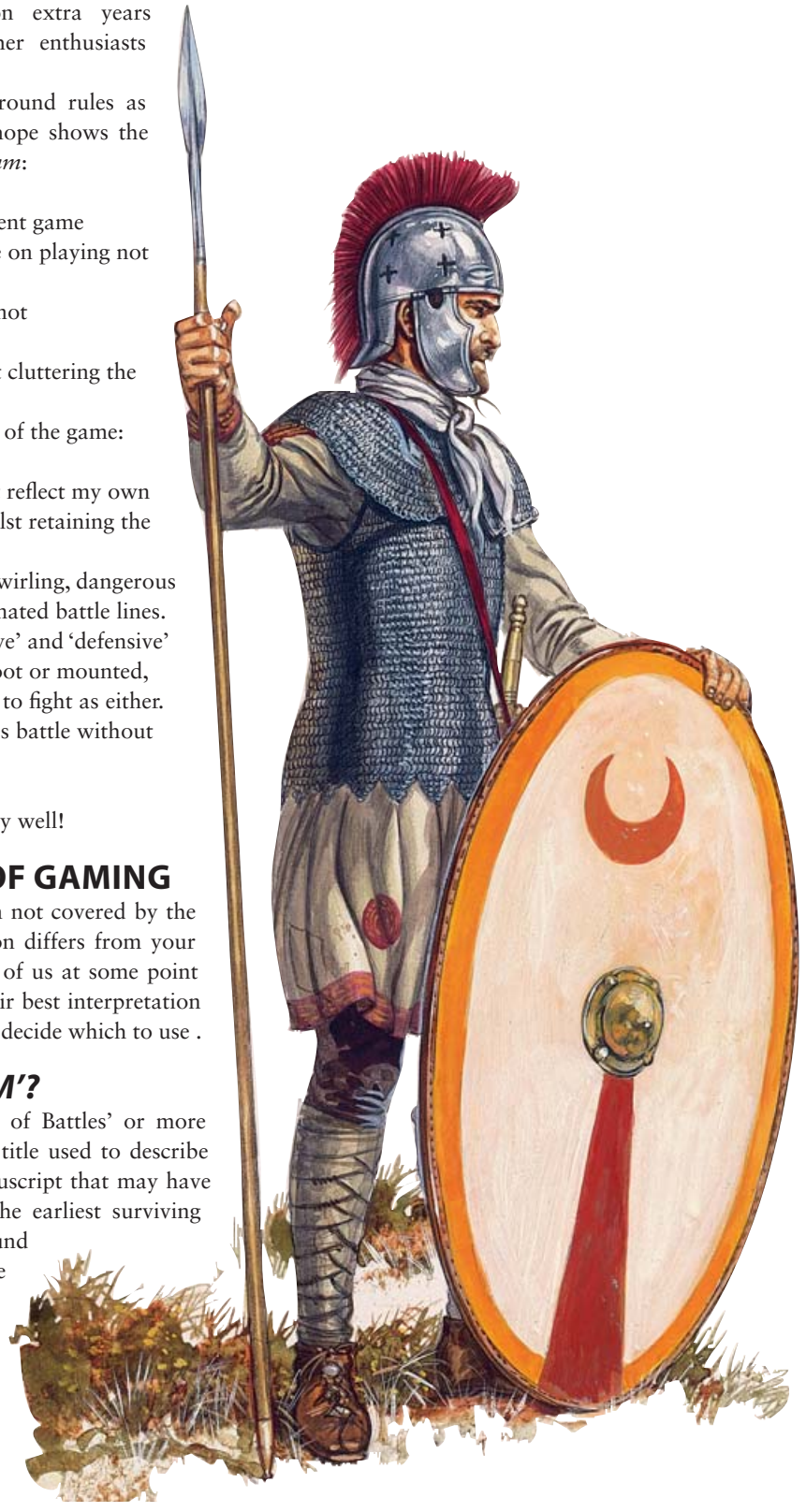
Enjoy the game and use your army well!

THE GOLDEN RULE OF GAMING

If you find yourself in a situation not covered by the rules or where your interpretation differs from your opponent's – it happens to most of us at some point – both players should present their best interpretation of the rules, and then roll a die to decide which to use .

WHY *'DUX BELLORUM'*?

Dux Bellorum, meaning 'Leader of Battles' or more imposingly 'War Duke', was the title used to describe the British hero Arthur in a manuscript that may have been written around AD 830 (the earliest surviving copy, however, was drafted around AD 1100). This isn't the place to restart the on-going debate as to whether Arthur was historical or legendary, but the title bestowed upon him in this manuscript seems an apt description for any aspiring Dark Ages warlord in history, legend, or game.



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UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

THINGS YOU'LL NEED IN ADDITION TO THIS BOOK

This book is just part of the kit you need to assemble to play *Dux Bellorum*. In addition to this book, you'll need:

- Two opposing armies of miniatures, counters, or paper armies
- A good handful of normal, six-sided dice
- A flat surface and ideally some model terrain to play on
- Counters or markers to track Leadership Points and Cohesion
- A tape measure marked in centimetres (cm) or Base Widths
- A friendly opponent (although the game may be played solo)

UNIT TYPES

All of the units that make up your army are either Mounted or Foot, and are further distinguished by their battlefield function and effectiveness. Your army usually consists of 32 Army Points made up from the following unit types:

- **Companions:** There's only one such unit per army, but Companions are always present in your army. May be Mounted or Foot, with Foot further divided into Warrior Companions and Shieldwall Companions. This represents the warlord's personal bodyguard and close family, the cream of the army's fighting strength and the best armed and armoured troops on the battlefield, so you can expect them to fight hard and die hard. Foot are tougher than Mounted, but Mounted move more swiftly across the battlefield. 5 Army Points per unit.
- **Shieldwall:** Close order Foot, emphasising protection and staying power above offensive and individual ability. Usually deployed by armies from kingdoms with better social and economic structures, you can expect Shieldwall to absorb plenty of attacks before crumbling, but they're unlikely to crush your opponent quickly. 3 or 5 Army Points per unit.
- **Warriors:** Loose formation clumps of fierce Foot, emphasising attack and charges above defence and unified action. The typical unit within heroic culture armies, Warriors are more versatile than Shieldwall but have less staying power. 3 or 5 Army Points per unit.
- **Riders:** Only one type of cavalry is available to most armies: medium cavalry throwing spears at close combat range from small horses, then following up with swords or more spears. Cataphract Riders are included for Late Roman armies (and represent *Dux Bellorum*'s only true heavy cavalry), and Chariots as an optional rule for Irish armies; these count as Riders for all purposes in the game, but have different unit stats. Riders are slightly less capable in combat than Warriors, have less staying power than Shieldwall, but can move quickly around the battle and extract themselves from combat with Foot. 3 or 5 Army Points per unit (6 for Cataphracts).
- **Bow:** Formations of bow-armed Foot drawn up into tighter formations than Skirmishers, giving them a little more punch in both missile and close combat; by the standards of this period,

Romano-British Shieldwall. 15mm Khurasan painted by Clibinarium.

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such formations are tactically sophisticated, are available only to Late Roman and Romano-British armies, and in limited numbers. 3 Army Points per unit.

- **Skirmishers:** Both Mounted and Foot, and always missile armed, Skirmishers are best suited to harassing enemies from a distance and moving out of the way before they can be contacted. Skirmishers usually cling to the flank of an army or fan out in front of it at the start of the battle, scurrying away when non-skirmishing move close; they should use their missiles to chip away at the enemy, and can rush in to support other units in close combat. Unlike other units, Skirmishers have different stats in certain situations. 1 or 2 Army Points.

Romano-British Riders. 28mm Gripping Beast, Foundry, and Westwind painted by Andy Hawes.

Differences between missile weapons are noted in *Dux Bellorum* but differences between close combat weapons are not. Missile weapons are either javelins or bows (the latter includes slings and crude crossbows, which operate with exactly the same effect; model whichever is most appropriate for your army). Javelins have a shorter range than bows, but can move and shoot in the same turn; bows are not mobile if shot by Foot.

Riders, Shieldwall and Warriors may be upgraded from Ordinary to Noble units, representing the superior fighters of an army usually better equipped and more skilled in close combat than everyday troops. These have enhanced unit stats, but cost 5 Army Points instead of 3 Army Points. Ordinary Warriors are useful on the battlefield, but you should expect your Noble units to go that extra mile (or roll those extra dice). If a troop type is referred to in the rules without a Noble or Ordinary prefix, all troops of that type are being referred to: Noble, Ordinary, and Companions.

One unit represents roughly 50 fighting men, less for skirmishers and mounted. There is no given ground scale, and this nominal number of fighting men per base is quoted simply to give an idea of the size of battle being fought: if your vision of Dark Ages battles involves a cast of thousands, your nominal ratio may be changed with no effect on game play.

UNIT STATS

Each unit is classified using the following stats; these remain constant throughout the game other than Cohesion, which is reduced when casualties are taken:

- **Move:** How far the unit may move per turn, measured in base widths (BW). Mounted units move the furthest, and Foot Skirmishers outstrip other infantry.
- **Bravery:** Represents control, command and morale within the unit, either via leadership, battle rage, or heroism. Determines if a unit may move, and also influences uncommanded moves for some troop types. Companions and Nobles have the highest Bravery values, due to their training, leadership and battlefield experience.

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- **Aggression (Missiles):** Number of dice rolled when striking at an enemy. Missile fire is weaker, and is shown in parenthesis for units equipped with them (missiles are not allowed if no number is shown). Companions and Warriors have the highest Aggression scores, due to their ferocious melee ability and willingness to get stuck into their enemies.
- **Protection:** The 'To Hit' target for attackers in close combat, representing shields, armour where available, and general formation. Companions and Shieldwalls have the best Protection values, representing their fine armour and large shields respectively. Protection for all units when defending against missile fire is always counted as 5, regardless of the unit's stated value.
- **Cohesion:** The numerical strength, endurance and will-to-fight within the unit combined into a single value; Companions and Noble Warriors have very high Cohesion scores, reflecting not only their training but also their self-belief and high morale. This stat will change during the game and when reduced to zero the unit will immediately rout, its playing piece removed from the board and taking no further part in the game.

In *Dux Bellorum*, a unit's fighting ability does not reduce as the Cohesion of the unit drops; it will keep fighting at full strength until it is destroyed. This is based on the idea that a small number of leading warriors did the greatest amount of fighting; Cohesion not only represents numbers of warriors but also their awareness and ability to react, so Cohesion being reduced to 0 does not necessarily represent a sudden wiping out of a unit, but that its will-to-fight is broken.

Cohesion is best shown by placing a very small die behind the unit and reducing the value shown when hits are taken; I recommend using contrasting colours for Noble and Ordinary units as it's sometimes difficult to tell these apart in Dark Ages armies. Markers other than dice can be used to represent Cohesion; some players might wish to use casualty miniatures beside their units, and numbered chits or miniature shields are equally good ideas.

Cohesion is tracked in this photo by removing miniatures from the base rather than using dice. Two bards monitor proceedings. 28mm Gripping Beast painted by the author.

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UNIT STATS USED IN *DUX BELLORUM*

The table below shows the common units available in *Dux Bellorum*. The number of each unit available to an army is shown in the army lists towards the end of the rulebook.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (and Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Army Points
Foot Companions (Warrior or Shieldwall)	2	10	6	6	6	Uncontrolled 3BW charge for Warrior Companions	5
Mounted Companions	4	10	5	6	5		5
Noble Riders	4	9	5	5	5		5
Cataphract Riders	3	9	6	6	4	Extra +1 Aggression when moving into contact	6
Ordinary Riders	4	7	4	5	4		3
Noble Warriors	2	9	6	5	6	Uncontrolled 3BW charge	5
Ordinary Warriors	2	7	5	5	5	Uncontrolled 3BW charge	3
Noble Shieldwall	2	9	4	6	4		5
Ordinary Shieldwall	2	7	3	6	4		3
Mounted Skirmishers	4	8 (6 for Morale)	2 (1 with Javelin; 2 with Bow)	4	2	2 BW range for Javelin or Bow. Any direction of fire.	2
Foot Skirmishers	3	8 (6 for Morale)	1 (2 with Bow or Javelin)	4	2	2 BW range for Javelin OR 4 BW range if Bow.	1
Foot Bow	2	7	2 (3 with Bow)	4	3	4 BW range.	3

LEADERS

Each army has one Leader of Battles or *Dux Bellorum*. Leaders (for short) are joined to their Companions' unit throughout the game and are removed counting as killed if that unit routs; most players will choose to include an army general or warlord miniature and standard bearer on their Leader's unit, but so long as you explain to your opponent which unit includes your Leader, you can model him as much or little as you wish. Aside from the higher stat lines for such units, a Leader and his Companions perform in the game as does any other unit. Leaders increase the motivation and abilities of their units by using Leadership Points.

Make your leaders stand out! 28mm Gripping Beast and Musketeer Miniatures.

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Welsh Noble Warriors with Cohesion dice and LPs; red dice denote Nobles, white dice Ordinary units. 28mm Gripping Beast painted by the author.

LEADERSHIP POINTS (LPS)

A Leader has a set number of Leadership Points to use each turn. Use coloured beads, gaming gems, or chits to signify where LPs are allocated each turn.

All Leaders of all armies start with a base value of 6 LPs to use each turn; when you build your army, you can purchase extra LPs instead of spending those Army Points on other units, up to a maximum LP value of 10:

Army's starting LPs	Cost in Army Points
6	0
7	2
8	4
9	7
10	10

Leadership Points do not only reflect the leader's own command abilities but that of the commanders of individual units and overall motivation of the whole army. If you purchase extra LPs for your army, this might mean that your Leader is a famous hero from the Dark Ages, such as Arthur or Aelle; alternatively, you might decide those extra LPs represent the unnamed yet equally heroic sub-commanders of individual units, whose names have been lost to the annals for hundreds of years.

SAMPLE ARMIES

To give you some idea of the size and composition of *Dux Bellorum* armies, here are three sample armies. Early, Middle and Late categories are explained in the Army Lists section, and I've included some tactical tips which I regularly fail to follow.

EARLY SAMPLE ARMY: LATE ROMAN

This is a nicely balanced Roman field army, possibly representing that which countered the Barbarian Conspiracy of AD 367. The Leadership Points are average, but with a powerful unit of Cataphracts working in conjunction with the Mounted Companions and Riders, this army has a good mobile strike force. The Shieldwall units will provide a solid line

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Late Roman Shieldwall. 15mm Khurasan painted by Clibinarium.

for the other units to operate around, and should try to pin down the enemy's main battle line. The Bow and Skirmishers can inflict damage from a distance, and prevent the less mobile Shieldwall from being outflanked. That's the theory, anyway (check out what really happened in AD 367 before getting your hopes up)!

Leadership Points: 6	
1	Mounted Companions plus Leader @ 5 points
1	Cataphract @ 6 points
1	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
4	Ordinary Shieldwall @ 3 points each
1	Bow @ 3 points
1	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points
1	Foot Skirmisher (Bow) @ 1 point
Special rules: None.	

MIDDLE SAMPLE ARMY: WELSH

This is a small but hard-hitting army from the late 6th century – perhaps it is the northern British army of the fearsome Urien of Rheged. Although comprising of only 8 units, 3 of these are top quality cavalry, 3 more are versatile Warriors, and 2 are fast-moving Skirmishers (one mounted, one not). This army also uses some of the strategies & tactics on offer to a Welsh army: Monks, who will add an LP bonus while in play, and a stampede of cattle or sheep, which can be driven into the enemy's battle line to reduce their Cohesion at a key moment. A small army will always be fragile (morale would be tested after the loss of 3 non-Skirmisher units in this army), but the player can use the Mounted units' speed to keep out of trouble and choose his or her combats accordingly.

Leadership Points: 6 (+2 for Monks)	
1	Mounted Companions plus Leader @ 5 points
2	Noble Riders @ 5 points each
3	Ordinary Warriors @ 3 points each
1	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points
1	Foot Skirmisher (Bow) @ 1 point
Special rules: 1 Monks @ 3 points, 1 Stampede @ 2 points	

LATE SAMPLE ARMY: SAXON

This is the Northumbrian army of King Oswald, who defeated the Welsh warlord Cadwallon in the AD 630s. Archaeological evidence shows that Saxon shields grew in size around AD 600, indicating a move towards Shieldwall armies rather than earlier, fluid-moving Warrior armies. Oswald's good generalship is represented by his above-average Leadership Points, making his army more receptive to inspiration. Although this Saxon army is well sized at 10 units, it is not an experienced fighting machine, lacking Noble units; but it does benefit from the tactical flexibility provided by allied Irish Warriors, who can operate alongside the Saxon Shieldwall. Northumbrian terrain is suited to skirmish warfare, so this Saxon army takes the maximum allowance of Foot Skirmishers. A player needs patience and intelligent use of LPs to successfully field a Shieldwall army, but the accompanying Warriors and Skirmishers should prevent this army from being outflanked too easily. With 2 points left over after buying all of the units desired, the Northumbrian player chose the Swift Deployment

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strategy, which makes it more likely that these Saxons will start the game on the attack (as an alternative, the player might have chosen to add one more LP, making Oswald a truly inspired warlord with 8 Leadership Points).

Leadership Points: 7 (costing 2 Army Points)	
1	Shieldwall Companions plus Leader @ 5 points
5	Ordinary Shieldwall @ 3 points each
2	Ordinary Irish Warrior allies @ 3 points each
2	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow/Sling) @ 1 point each
Special rules: Swift deployment @ 2 Army Points.	

BASING

Base sizes are not hugely important in *Dux Bellorum*, so long as all units have the same frontage (unit base widths are the measurements used in the game). I recommend the following dimensions as unit base widths, as they are common within Ancients wargaming, but there are no hard and fast requirements:

For 15mm and smaller	4cm base width
For 20mm and larger	6cm base width

Base depths are less important, but the following guidelines show common examples:

Troop type	15mm and smaller	20mm and larger
Mounted	3cm base depth	4cm base depth
Foot	2cm base depth	3cm base depth
Optional for Shieldwall and Shieldwall Companions	1.5cm base depth	2cm base depth

The number of miniatures on each base also makes no difference to game play, but the quantities shown below are commonly used:

Troop type	Number of 15mm or larger miniatures per base
All Riders	3
All Shieldwall & Shieldwall Companions	4
All Warriors & Warrior Companions	3 or 4
Mounted Skirmishers	2
Foot Skirmishers	2

Oswald's Saxon army modelled on 12cm bases. Companions on centre left, Irish to the right, and Skirmishers to the front. 28mm army painted by James Morris.

Oswald's Saxon army modelled on 6cm bases. 28mm army painted by James Morris.

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4cm and 8cm base width units. 15mm Feudal Castings.

If you're using 10mm or 6mm miniatures, get the right look by using the following guidelines:

- Shieldwalls have more miniatures than Warriors
- Warriors have more miniatures than Riders
- Riders have more than Skirmishers

Playing tip: If you're basing a lot of smaller miniatures, to distinguish between Warriors and Shieldwall (which could otherwise be pretty impossible at 6mm), try putting the majority of Warriors at the back edge of the base with a few braver warriors charging towards the front edge; for Shieldwall, try placing the majority of miniatures in a straight line towards the front edge of the base, with a number scattered around behind ready to fill gaps in the line.

PLAYING WITH OTHER BASE SIZES

Some players have enough miniatures and table space to play using larger sized unit bases with more miniatures on them or focussing on a more scenic base or vignette. The smaller the scale of your miniatures, the more this method of basing begins to look like a real army; if it looks good to you and your opponent has units based in the same way, *Dux Bellorum* can be scaled up or down as much as you wish. If you use larger unit bases, you'll want to increase the size of your playing area too.

Here are some ideas to try out:

- Double the base depths for Foot and double the number of miniatures on each base; Mounted remain based as shown earlier.
- Use 8cm base widths (and deeper bases) for any scale of miniature – with four times the number of miniatures in 15mm or just a few more for 28mm miniatures.
- If your playing space and wallet size allow, try using 10cm or 12cm base widths, again remembering to increase base depth.
- If your miniatures are individually mounted, as is often the case with 28mm miniatures, mount them on temporary movement trays (commercially available or cut from thick card), or move your miniatures as rough 'clumps' representing units occupying an area equal to the base widths shown earlier. If you use the latter method, be sure to be forgiving of your opponent's – inevitably – looser interpretation of where your unit's base really starts and ends, and always measure distances from one central miniature (a good use for some of the lovely miniature standard bearers available).

MEASURING AND BASE WIDTHS (BW)

All measurements in *Dux Bellorum* are given in Base Widths (BW); this means that your game is not restricted by draconian basing requirements.

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One BW equals the distance across one of your unit's entire frontages: so, for example, if your units are each formed of one base 6cm wide your BW equals 6cm, and if your units are formed of two 6cm bases pushed together to make a single unit your BW equals 12cm (and you'll need more table space). If maths isn't your thing, refer to the following table of game measurements for the most common unit BWs:

Distance in BW	Actual distance 4cm frontage	Actual distance for 6cm frontage	Actual distance for 8cm frontage
1	4cm	6cm	8cm
2	8cm	12cm	16cm
3	12cm	18cm	24cm
4	16cm	24cm	32cm
5	20cm	30cm	40cm

Any distance may be pre-measured by any player before making a move. When measuring the distance between two units or groups, whether for movement, missile fire, or any other distance, always measure the shortest distance (the straight line distance between the closest points on each base). When moving, be sure not to move any corner edge of a base further than the maximum allowed distance.

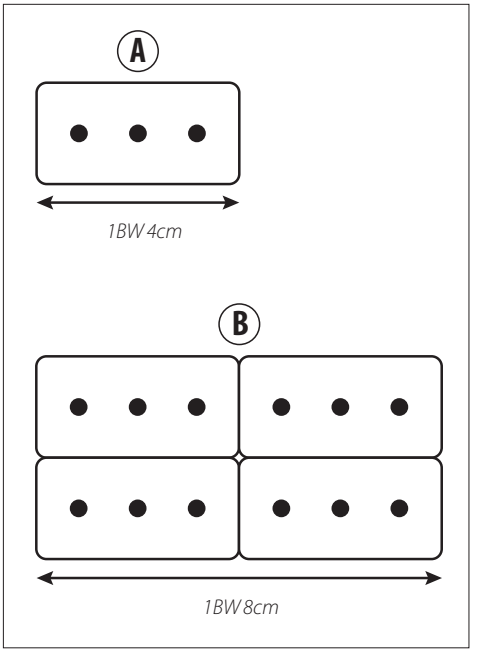
Movement in a miniatures game is an art, not a science: please don't get into arguments about the odd millimetre here and there, or the exact angle being used. If you're playing against an opponent to whom this is important, agree before the game on what is a reasonable degree of 'unit wiggle'.

PLAYING THE GAME

GETTING READY TO PLAY

To ensure that everything runs smoothly from the start, use the following checklist to ensure you don't overlook anything you or your opponent needs to know before setting up.

1. Agree on the era of game being played (Early, Middle or Late) if you wish to use this rule.
2. Choose or randomly select a scenario.
3. Announce what army you're commanding, agree on the points value of the armies used (32 Army Points or as shown in the scenario) and whether strategies & tactics may be selected.
4. If not already decided, select your army's units in secret.
5. Roll to determine who will be the Aggressor (see 'Deployment').
6. Lay out the battlefield (see the next section).
7. Tell your opponent about any strategies & tactics or extra LPs you have purchased.
8. Deploy both armies (see 'Deployment'), making sure that your opponent knows whether units are Warriors or Shieldwall and the armament of your Skirmishers.
9. Clarify any rules interpretations, house rules, and so on.
10. Start the first turn using the turn sequence. Remember it's just a game and that you're playing to enjoy yourself!



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SETTING OUT THE BATTLEFIELD

A battlefield can be of any size, but as a guideline, good 15mm games can be had on a minimum size board of 60x60cm and 120x90cm for 28mm. The number of terrain pieces to be used is determined by the scenario or as shown in the army lists (usually between 1 and 3 pieces of terrain). Unless otherwise outlined in a scenario, the Repeller selects the terrain and places it; the Aggressor then chooses his own army's baseline (which must be one of the two longer lengths if playing on an oblong tabletop) and the Repeller must choose the baseline opposite.

TERRAIN EFFECTS

For some gamers, terrain building is a hobby in its own right and well worth doing; for others terrain is a necessary chore needed to lend some accuracy to your tabletop. Terrain can be as simple as a few books placed under a green cloth to represent hills, or as inspiring as a carefully modelling landscape with woods, streams, hedges, and movable bases of cows and geese which have no bearing on the game but make the countryside look lived in.

Unless indicated by a terrain piece, the tabletop is considered to be open, flat ground with no effect on the troops or battle. A terrain piece may be a Wood, Hill, River, Ditch/Stream, Hedge, Wall, High Wall, Bog, Village, or Outcrop. These all count as either area terrain or linear terrain, and some are also high (blocking line of sight). Roads are not of tactical value in *Dux Bellorum*, but would have been used strategically – add one to your battlefield if you wish, and count it as open, flat ground, 1BW wide through all area terrain.

Area terrain pieces can be of any reasonable size, recommended as approximately 5x3 BW. Rivers must run from one board edge to that opposite, running across the width of the battle between the two battle lines (unless determined by scenario). Linear features (Hedge, Wall, Ditch/Stream) must be in lengths of 5BW or less and as narrow as possible; using more than one length counts as another terrain piece. High Walls may only be used as part of a scenario and either run off the board or complete a defensive circuit on the table; the interior is usually a village.

A unit counts as being in area terrain if more than half of the base is in that terrain; to benefit from linear terrain in combat, at least half of the

Late Romans slowly crossing a bog. 15mm Essex Miniatures.

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base must be behind and touching that terrain. A unit counts as uphill if closer to the summit of a hill than its opponent. Within a group, some units may count as being in terrain and others not.

For more information on how terrain affects movement, firing, and close combat, please refer to those sections.

Terrain type	Area or Linear	Movement effect	Visibility effect	Combat effect	Notes
Bog	Area	Half remaining movement for units other than Warriors or Foot Skirmishers; no group move.	None	Penalty when attacking for Shieldwall and non-Skirmisher Mounted.	
Ditch/Stream	Linear	Stop on contact, move as normal next turn.	None	Penalty when attacking for Shieldwall and non-Skirmisher Mounted.	
Hedge	Linear	Stop on contact, move as normal next turn.	None	Penalty when attacking.	
High Wall	Linear (high)	Impassable	Blocks line of sight.	Penalty when attacking, Mounted unable to attack in close combat or cross.	Only used in scenario games (see Scenarios section for more details).
Hill	Area (high)	None	Blocks line of sight.	Penalty when attacking uphill.	
Outcrop	Area (high)	Impassable	Blocks line of sight.	Impassable	
River	Area	Half remaining movement for units other than Warriors or Foot Skirmishers; no group move.	None	Penalty when attacking for Shieldwall and non-Skirmisher Mounted.	May also be Deep, meaning it can only be passed at bridges/fords as Area Terrain (only used in scenario games).
Village	Area (high)	Half remaining movement for units other than Warriors or Foot Skirmishers; no group move.	Blocks line of sight.	Penalty when attacking for Shieldwall and non-Skirmisher Mounted.	
Wall	Linear	Stop on contact, move as normal next turn.	None	Penalty when attacking.	
Wood	Area (high)	Half remaining movement for units other than Warriors or Foot Skirmishers; no group move.	Blocks line of sight.	Penalty when attacking.	

Irish warband emerging from a wood. 28mm Gripping Beast.

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Saxon Companions looking tough. 28mm Harlequin Miniatures.

DEPLOYMENT AND DETERMINING AGGRESSORS AND REPELLERS

A scenario might specify the Aggressor and Repeller. If not, before laying out the terrain roll one die and add the Aggressor Rating of your army; compare this to your opponent's roll and Aggressor Rating total. The higher scorer is the game's Aggressor, and in the case of a draw, the player with the higher Aggressor Rating is the Aggressor (re-roll if the ratings are equal). In some phases of the game turn the Aggressor goes first, and goes second in others, as outlined in the rules.

Place all of your units/groups onto the playing area in the following sequence, the Aggressor completing each deployment phase and then the Repeller, before both moving on to the next phase:

1. First place all non-Skirmisher Foot
2. Then place all non-Skirmisher Mounted
3. Finally place all Skirmishers

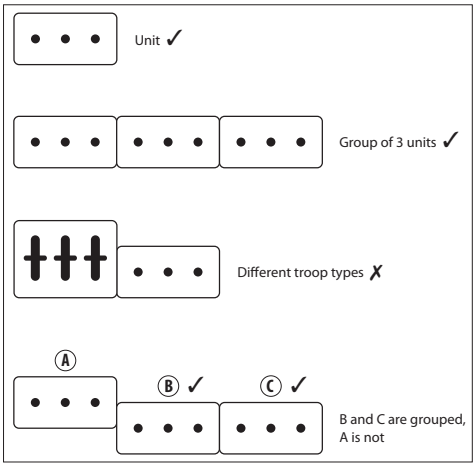
All units/groups must be placed between 3–5BW from the centre line of the table, or as limited by a scenario. Once both sides have deployed, proceed to the turn sequence for Turn 1.

GROUPS AND UNITS

Units may move and take some Bravery tests as individuals or as part of a group, but all units fight and react to combat outcomes individually. Once close combat begins, groups usually break up rapidly, making individual units' Bravery more important.

A group needs to be formed of a straight line with straight frontage, and be formed of the same troop type: Warriors, Shieldwall, or Riders; Noble or Ordinary can be mixed in a group; Companions may group with Mounted or Foot depending on which they are. A group cannot be more than one base deep, and units joined onto the rear of a group act as individual units or a group of their own; units to the rear cannot fight in close combat. Skirmishers may never join a group.

Friendly units automatically form a group if they move into a legal group position; this means that a long line of units in close combat might form a group, limiting the number of LPs you can allocate to them. Automatic grouping reflects the morale boost and protection of friends in close proximity; in game terms, it provides clarity on where groups start and end.



Units are more flexible but groups shift more troops in unison, and may shift them more efficiently. Units within a group fight individually, but for movement use the best Bravery within the group. There is no maximum number of units that may form a group – an entire army could be drawn up into one group. Units may enter and leave groups freely, but a broken chain of units will break a group.

TURN SEQUENCE

The game is divided into turns, each of which is sub-divided into the phases shown below. Follow this sequence in each turn of the game; both players complete each phase before moving on to the next. Unless otherwise stated, the Aggressor goes first.

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1. Alternately place LPs (Repeller goes first).
2. Missile fire (simultaneous outcomes). Reduce unit Cohesion as required.
3. Move units/groups, testing Bravery for each unit/group.
4. Close combat (simultaneous outcomes). Reduce unit Cohesion as required.
5. Check morale and victory conditions, reduce LPs if necessary, and return all unused LPs to players.
6. Start the next turn.

ALLOCATING LPS
IN BRIEF

- Starting with the Repeller, take it in turns to place all of your LPs with units/groups.
- You do not need to decide how those LPs will be used at this point, just which unit/groups to place them with.
- 1–3 LPs may be placed with a unit/group.
- Once LPs have been placed with a unit/group, you may not add more later in this phase.
- LPs allocated to a group may be spent on the whole group for Bravery tests, or on individual units within the group as you wish.

You use your Leadership Points each turn to improve the chances of your units to perform well – either by your Leader's personal influence, the influence of minor leaders not represented by miniatures, or by the army's overall morale and élan. As your casualties mount, your LPs decline, meaning that the pressure is on you to use your LPs in the best possible way to gain a tactical advantage. And you'll usually find you never have quite enough LPs to spread around your army as you'd like...

Playing tip: If you'd like a more flexible, motivated army, instead of spending all of your Army Points on units, spend some points on increasing your Leader's LPs. With a good number of LPs and an army comprising mostly of Nobles, a small army can be very effective on the battlefield.

During this phase of the game, Repeller and Aggressor take it in turns to place LPs onto any unit/group in their army:

- LPs are placed alternately, the games' Repeller placing first with one chosen unit/group, then the Aggressor does the same, and so on until all LPs have been allocated for this turn.
- You can decide how to place them, but no more than 3 LPs can be placed per unit/group. This reflects the difficulty in keeping large groups of troops together and commanding them effectively.
- Place all of the LPs you're allocating to one unit/group at once – you may not boost this with more LPs later in the allocation phase.
- You may not skip putting LPs down while you still have some unallocated, but once you've used all of your LPs, your opponent may place his remaining LPs as he wishes.
- When placing your LPs, you don't need to state what you're going to use those LPs to do; for now, you're just flagging that unit/group for some extra leadership during this turn.
- Not all units/groups need to be allocated LPs – LPs make it easier for a unit/group to be successful, but units/groups can still function without any.

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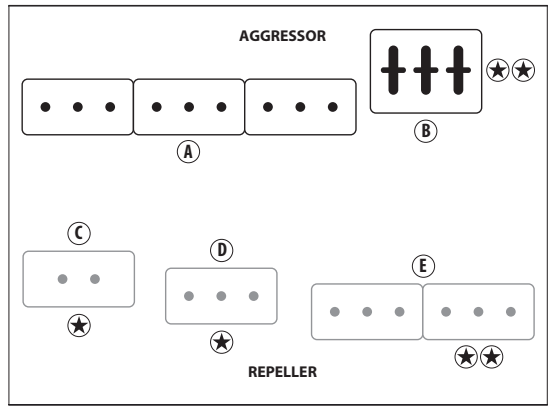
The rules refer to LPs used by 'unit/groups' throughout; this is because LPs may be allocated to either individual ungrouped units, or to a group as a whole. Apart from during Bravery tests, LPs assigned to a group are spent on individual units within the group, as and how the player wishes.

When your army loses a unit, you must surrender 1 LP per lost unit at the end of the turn. When your Leader is killed (which happens when his Companions are removed from play), you may no longer allocate LPs in future turns, so will be disadvantaged; any LPs still in play may be used during this turn.

A group may only split during the movement phase, or as a result of close combat; a group cannot be split during LP allocation to allow more LPs to be placed with those units. If a group splits during movement, you must assign any remaining LPs between the new units/groups created by the break; these may be divided in any way you choose. If two groups join making a combined number of LPs more than 3, the excess is immediately lost, bringing the new group's LPs down to 3.



1) Aggressor has 2 LP, Repeller has 4 LP
2) Repeller places 2 LP with Group E (they intend to split this turn but LPs are played on the group, and divided when the units move apart)
3) Aggressor places 2 LPs on Unit B
4) Repeller places 1 LP on Unit D
5) Aggressor has no more LPs to place
6) Repeller places remaining LP on Unit C
7) Neither player says how they intend to use LPs

Playing tip: The system for placing LPs allows you to disguise your main thrust of attack until the later stages of placement. If you know you're going to place a lot of LPs with one unit/group to make it surge forward or strike with extra dice, hold these LPs back and place LPs elsewhere to begin with. By the time you come to place LPs for your main attack, your opponent may no longer have enough LPs left to counter your actions with.

USING ALLOCATED LPS DURING THE GAME TURN

During the turn, LPs can be used for any of the following actions. If multiple LPs have been placed on a unit/group, they do not all need to be used for the same action or by the same unit within the group, and their use can be spread throughout the turn. The actions LPs can be used for are as follows:

- Interrupt an opponent's movement sequence to move one of your own unit/groups first (see the section 'Using LPs to interrupt your opponent's move'). This allows units/groups to out-manoeuvre their opponents (even allowing well-led Foot to charge Mounted units).
- Boost (or reduce, in the case of uncontrolled charges) Bravery for a Bravery test (up to all 3 LP per unit/group per Bravery test). This may be done for as many different Bravery tests the unit/group makes during the turn, but LPs are spent on individual tests rather than applying throughout the turn. Unlike other LP uses, spending them on a Bravery test applies to the whole group not just an individual unit within the group. Using allocated LPs in this way might allow an otherwise unenthusiastic unit/group make a critical move at a crucial moment of the game.
- Boost Aggression for close combat, but not for missile fire (up to all 3 LPs per unit). This can make a Shieldwall fight as well as the best Warriors, or Noble Warriors or Companions angels of death – once again, at the cost of your other units benefiting from your LPs.
- Cancel 1 hit caused during this turn per LP spent (up to all 3 LPs per unit). This can make even the most feeble of unit perform like a rock, albeit at the cost of your vital LPs.

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LPs used to modify dice rolls must be declared and spent before the dice are rolled, with the exception of Bravery tests and cancelling out missile hits, for which the LPs may be added after the initial roll.

When spent, LPs are returned to your hand for use again next turn; any LPs left unused at the end of the turn are also returned for use in the next turn.

OPTIONAL LP RULE: LIMITED PROTECTION

If you want a faster game, agree with your opponent to limit the number of LPs available for cancelling hits to either 2 or 1 per unit per turn. This is especially decisive in games pitting two Shieldwall armies against each other, where Protection levels are already high.

OPTIONAL LP RULE: COMMAND OVER DISTANCE

If you wish to represent the difficulty of a leader keeping control over his army in the heat of battle and out of sight try this: when placing LPs with a unit/group whose nearest point is further than 5 BW from any part of the Leader's base, or any distance beyond high terrain, this costs the player 1 extra LP.

MISSILE FIRE

IN BRIEF

- Missile troops may shoot up to their maximum range at enemies within their firing arc.
- Add up all Aggression directed at each target and roll a number of dice equal to this (combining the shooting of all units firing at the target).
- The score needed to hit is equal to or higher than the target's Protection; for missile fire, all units have a Protection value of 5.
- Targets may use LPs to cancel hits inflicted during this combat, and subtract any remaining hits from their Cohesion. If Cohesion is reduced to 0 the unit routs and is removed from the game.
- Foot with Bows may not voluntarily move later in the turn if they shoot in the missile phase.

In *Dux Bellorum*, missile fire can be useful for softening up your enemies, and chasing away their skirmishers, but rarely will you defeat an enemy with missiles alone... unless you're very canny and have the Midas touch

Pictish Foot Skirmishers. 28mm Gripping Beast and Foundry, painted by James Morris.

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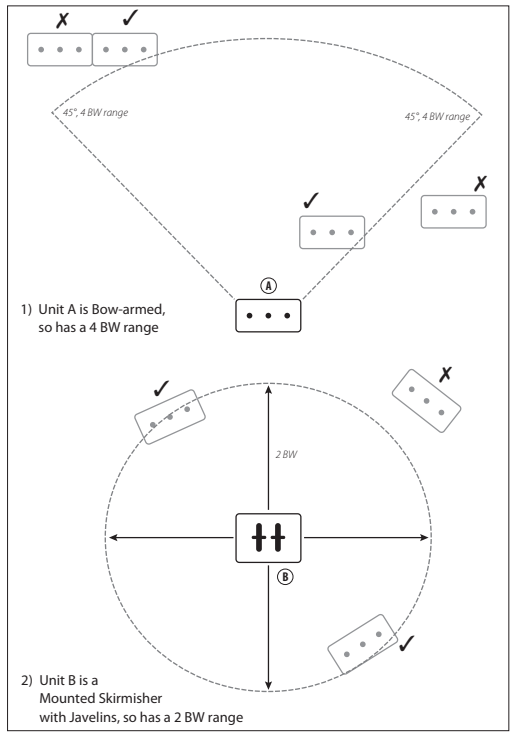
with your dice.

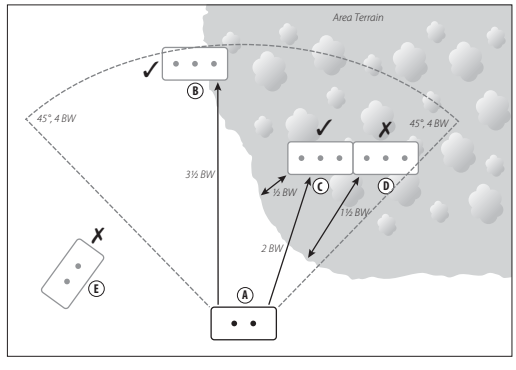
Units may not move and shoot unless Foot Skirmishers with javelins, or Mounted Skirmishers with bows or javelins, so only shoot with bows on foot if you're not wanting to move that unit during this turn!

Select a target within range (usually 2 or 4 BW) and line of sight (anywhere in front of the shooting unit's base within 45 degrees directly in front, except for Mounted Skirmishers who see all round), complying with target priority.
Line of sight has the following restrictions:

- Units have only 1 BW vision into or through high area terrain, and high walls block line of sight unless the firing unit is manning them.
- A target may be shot at if all of its closest base edge is visible to the shooter, even if the target is in close combat.
- Missiles may shoot over troops if the shooter or target is on a hill or defending a high wall.

Playing tip: Shieldwall and Companions are more vulnerable to missile fire than in close combat (arrows and slingshot are harder to defend against no matter how skilled in combat you are or how closely you stand to your flank man). However, it's unlikely that you'll destroy a Shieldwall army by just standing off and firing at it. Use missiles to weaken such opponents but be prepared to charge your own Foot in to finish them off.


45°, 4 BW range
45°, 4 BW range
A
1) Unit A is Bow-armed, so has a 4 BW range
2 BW
B
2) Unit B is a Mounted Skirmisher with Javelins, so has a 2 BW range



1) Unit A is bow-armed
2) Unit B may be shot at because less than half is in area terrain (see Terrain section)
3) Unit C may be shot at because it is less than 1 BW into area terrain
4) Unit D may not be shot at because it is more than 1 BW into area terrain
5) Unit E may not be shot at because it is outside the firing arc

MISSILE FIRE PROCEDURE

Follow the procedure shown below to resolve all missile fire, remembering that all shooting outcomes are simultaneous:

1. Declare which of your units will shoot at which targets; the target only fights back if missile armed, is in range, and the shooter is their priority target.
2. Add up the Aggression (and modifiers) for all units firing at a target and roll a number of dice together equalling the combined Aggression value. LPs may not be used to boost missile fire Aggression, but add or subtract the following number of dice if relevant:

+1 if the target is within 1 BW or shooting into the rear of the target (per unit firing)
–1 if missile target/shooter is in area terrain other than Bog, or if target is behind linear terrain other than River or Ditch/Stream (per unit firing). Do not count twice if both shooter and target are in such terrain.

3. Any die rolled that equals or betters the enemy's Protection scores a hit. For missile fire, the Protection value is 5 for all units (including those whose usual Protection is 6 or 4). The target may use LPs to cancel out hits inflicted during this combat, up to a maximum of 3 per turn (no dice rolls required); use of LPs to cancel missile fire does not need to be declared until after the Aggression dice have been rolled. Any outstanding hits are immediately removed from the target's Cohesion.

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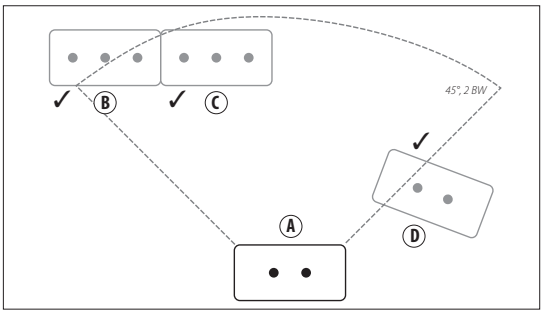


1) Unit A is javelin-armed
2) Unit D is the priority target due to proximity
3) If Unit D was not there, Unit C (rather than Unit B) would be the priority target as it is closer to Unit A

4. If the target is reduced to 0 Cohesion, it routs and is removed from the game as a casualty (reducing the player's LPs by 1 and possibly requiring morale tests, both at the end of the turn). If hits are inflicted but Cohesion remains above 0, note the new Cohesion scores for each unit, which applies until more hits are taken.
5. Missile fire does not cause the target unit to retreat.

Bravery tests are not required to shoot missiles, and any unit may only shoot once each turn.

Playing tip: Protect vulnerable units by spending LPs to cancel out hits; this represents closely formed troops locking shields to make an impenetrable wall and skirmishers and other loose formations going to ground or taking evasive action.

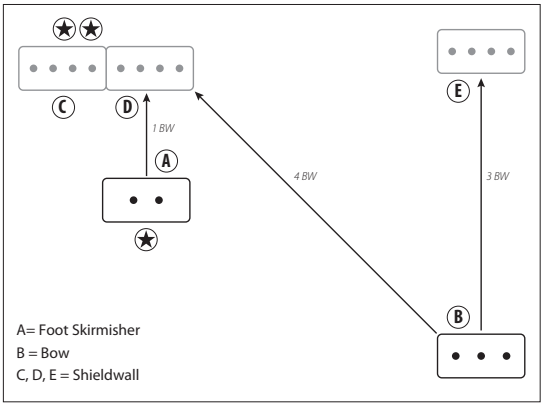
TARGET PRIORITY

A firing unit must target a unit that could contact it during that unit's next move (enemy units in close combat do not need to be targeted unless the shooter wishes), if within range and line of sight. If more than one enemy qualifies for this, the shooter must target the closest eligible unit. If more than one enemy is the same distance away, the shooter may choose which to target.

UNIT STATS RELEVANT TO MISSILE FIRE

Unit type	Aggression when using Missiles	Notes
Mounted Skirmishers	1 if Javelin 2 if Bow	2 BW range for Javelin or Bow. Any direction of fire.
Foot Skirmishers	2 with Bow, Sling or Javelin	2 BW range for Javelin. 4 BW range if Bow.
Foot Bow	3 with Bow	4 BW range.

1) Unit A fires at Unit D. It has 2 Aggression for its javelins, +1 for being within 1 BW. It may not use its LP for missile fire
2) Unit D usually has Protection 6, but all targets have Protection 5 against missiles
3) Unit A rolls 6, 6, 5 – three hits! Unit D uses its 2 LPs to cancel hits, but loses 1 point of Cohesion for the third hit
4) Bow-armed Unit B fires at Unit E (its closest target) with Aggression 3, again needing 5s. It rolls 2, 4, 5 – so Unit E loses 1 Cohesion



MOVEMENT AND BRAVERY TESTS IN BRIEF

- In sequence (Skirmishers, Mounted, Foot, Aggressor then Repeller for each of these), players wishing to move units/groups take a Bravery test and move the unit/group if successful.
- Groups have limited movement choices, units are more flexible.
- Groups must be formed of the same troop type (see earlier 'Groups and Units' section).
- Terrain affects movement (see earlier 'Terrain' section).
- You may use LPs to try to interrupt an opposing unit/group's action.
- Troop movement within 1BW of an enemy's front is restricted.
- Warriors must test for uncontrolled charges.

Movement can be made by individual units or by groups (see the earlier section on groups for details of how to form one). As a general rule, groups are an inflexible but efficient way to move large numbers of troops in one go, and individual units allow greater flexibility in placing troops exactly where you need them.

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Units/groups may never exceed their Move value or move twice in a turn except as a result of close combat, and may only take a Bravery test for movement once per turn. A unit may not join a group and then move with that group during the same turn; however, units ending their move in a legal group position will automatically group.

Playing tip: Try grouping units at the start of the game to ensure that your battle line moves towards the enemy in good order. The group movement rules mean that all or none of the units in the group will move; this prevents them fragmenting into smaller or individual units through failed Bravery tests. Groups will usually break up once close combat is joined, but remember you can reform a group as part of most moves.

MOVEMENT SEQUENCE AND BRAVERY TESTS

You may attempt to motivate and move any or all of your units/groups in the following order (which may also be interrupted by your opponent spending LPs, as outlined later in this section):

1. Aggressor's Skirmishers (Mounted and Foot)
2. Repeller's Skirmishers (Mounted and Foot)
3. Aggressor's Mounted
4. Repeller's Mounted
5. Aggressor's Foot
6. Repeller's Foot

Within this sequence, you may decide the order in which to move your units. To move a unit or group, take a Bravery test. To pass a Bravery test, you must score equal to or less than Bravery on the total of 2 dice:

- If the test succeeds, the unit/group may move; if not, it stays in place.
- If a unit/group fails a Bravery test and has enough LPs allocated to it, it may spend LPs after rolling the Bravery test to modify the result to succeed.

A group moves at the pace of the slowest unit within it, must remain in constant contact with the rest of the group, uses the best Bravery present, and only makes one Bravery test for the whole group.

Playing tip: Try placing one Noble unit in a group with Ordinary troops, as this will increase the chance of the entire group passing its Bravery tests.

Picts heading south. 28mm Gripping Beast.

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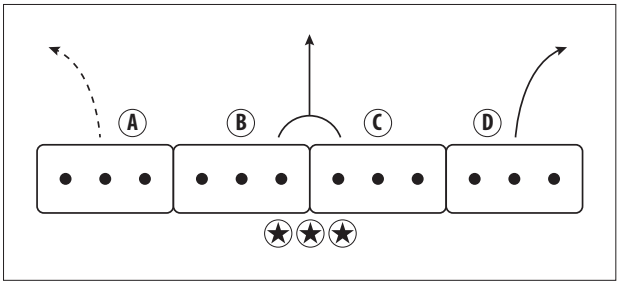

1) The player decides to split the group, with Units A and D moving away as shown
2) The maximum of 3 LPs per group has been allocated to the current, complete group
3) In the Movement phase, Unit A fails its Bravery test so can't move; Units B and C pass their group Bravery Text and move straight ahead; Unit D passes its Bravery test and moves to the right
4) The player chooses to split the group's LPs, with 2 LPs going to Units B and C, and 1 LP going to Unit D (although all 3 LPs could have stayed with any one group or unit)

BREAKING GROUPS

If you want to split one or more units from a group, Bravery is tested for each new unit/group individually, immediately before those units move (but after LPs have been allocated). A unit wishing to break away from its group but failing its Bravery test cannot move at all this turn, but the rest of the group may move if it passed its own test. Group LPs are split between the new units/groups as you wish, abiding by the normal allocation rules.

If a group move results in some units of the group being blocked by impassable terrain, friends, enemies or anything else preventing the group's formation to be maintained, the player must halt the entire group at that point (with the exceptions shown below). During the next turn, the group will need to split into individual units to move around the blocking object; in such situations, groups are quite unwieldy, reflecting the lack of regular, trained troops in the Dark Ages.

There are two exceptions where a group Bravery test is taken and units can split after this:

- A group must split to enter area terrain, but the Bravery test is taken as a group at the start of the move and the group breaks into individual units upon entering the area terrain; each unit tests Bravery individually while starting a move in the area terrain.
- A group may split to contact multiple enemies (see 'Contacting enemy units').

MOVEMENT PROCEDURE

Movement is kept very simple in *Dux Bellorum*, as Dark Ages Britain was not a land of Byzantine military manuals or parade ground manoeuvre. The key to legal movement is be sure not to move any corner edge of a base further than the maximum allowed move, and when wheeling to ensure that one front edge of the group only pivots on the spot. Movement choices when a Bravery test has been passed are as follows:

- A unit/group may move any distance up to its maximum Move distance, or choose not to move at all even if taking a Bravery test to decide if it may move (apart from during an uncontrolled charge).
- A group moves directly forward with no drift to either side, or wheels forward on one corner up to its full move or 90 degrees (whichever is less). A Foot group may move directly backwards (without drift) half a BW without changing facing.
- An individual unit may move freely in any direction up to its maximum Move.
- An individual unit may turn about face (180 degrees) on the spot at a cost of 1BW regardless of terrain or troop type; this is more efficient than other turns to the rear.
- Unless Warriors, Warrior Companions or Foot Skirmishers, units moving inside area terrain move at half their remaining Move. All groups split when entering area terrain (including Warriors) and must move as individual units in that terrain; they may reform when emerging from area terrain.

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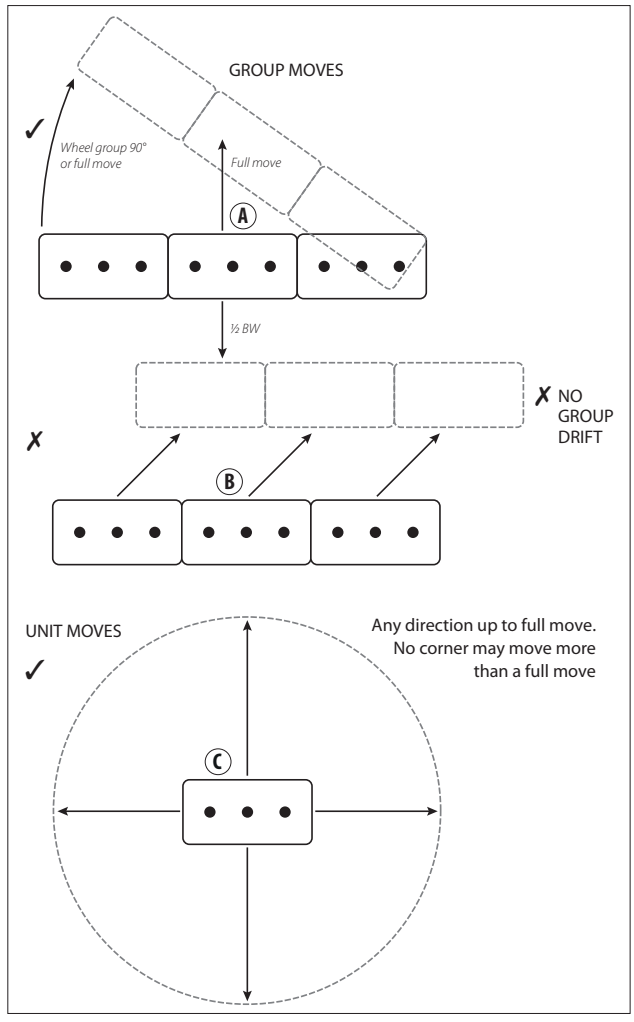
- Any unit/group wishing to cross linear terrain moves into contact with the feature and stops. During the next turn, the unit/group crosses the feature and move normally. Fords and bridges are crossed as area terrain rather than linear features.
- Warriors must add 1BW to their move if this will bring them into contact with an enemy (representing a furious charge). See the uncontrolled charge rules for more details.
- Units may not move and shoot unless Foot Skirmishers with javelins, or Mounted Skirmishers with bows or javelins.
- Foot Skirmishers may move through any friends and be moved through by any friends at any angle if they have enough movement to do so, at no cost to the distance moved. No other interpenetration is allowed.



For more information on units moving into contact with an enemy, see the close combat section.

USING LPS TO INTERRUPT YOUR OPPONENT'S MOVE

This rule allows troops to move out of their normal sequence, charging enemies before they can evade or make their own charge, or to move quickly to evade the enemy or charge at a different target. It can only be used in close proximity to enemy movements.

You may choose to interrupt your opponent's move by spending an LP allocated to your interrupting unit/group, if all of the following apply:

- Your interrupting unit/group has at least 1 LP allocated to it.
- Your opponent is about to roll dice for a unit/group's Bravery test and the distance between that and your interrupting unit/group would allow contact to occur as a result of this movement.
- Your interrupting unit has not already taken a Bravery test to move this turn (whether successful or not), has not fired bows if Foot, and is unengaged (see the next section).

Your opponent may cancel this interrupting action by spending an LP of his own allocated to his original unit/group. Both players may continue to outbid one another until one player does not wish to or has no more LPs to spend on the unit/groups involved in this exchange. If the interrupting player spends more LPs than his opponent, he makes a Bravery test for the interrupting unit/group and if successful moves it immediately before his opponent's unit may move (no test required if launching an uncontrolled Charge); if he spends less LPs, his interrupting unit/group does not move and his opponent makes the Bravery test for his original unit/group. An interruption cannot be further interrupted by either player!

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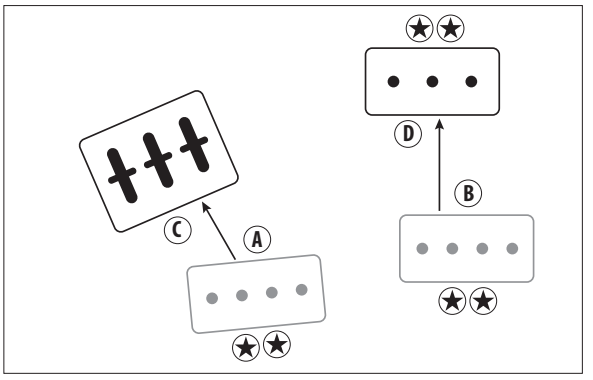


1) Unit C would move first as it is Mounted, but Unit A (a Foot unit) interrupts the move sequence by spending an LP. This allows Unit A to move first, into combat with Unit C. The normal move sequence then resumes
2) Unit B declares it will move to contact the enemy Unit D. Unit D spends an LP to move first, but Unit B spends its own LP to cancel this. They repeat the process with their remaining LPs, meaning that Unit D still moves first, but neither Unit B nor Unit D have any LPs remaining

When the interruption is resolved, the original player concludes his own movement and the usual movement sequence resumes. Both players expend any LPs they bid, regardless of who eventually moves first. A unit successfully interrupting an opponent's move (taking its Bravery test, whether it passes or not) may not move again during the turn – a unit may only make a Bravery test for movement once per turn.

Playing tip: Try spending LPs to evade or pre-emptively charge an enemy. This helps Skirmishers keep out of trouble (allowing them the classic 'evade enemy' tactic), gives other units the chance to out-react enemies, and makes your opponent wary of any unit/group you've allocated LPs to, knowing that you might move out of sequence to scupper their plans.

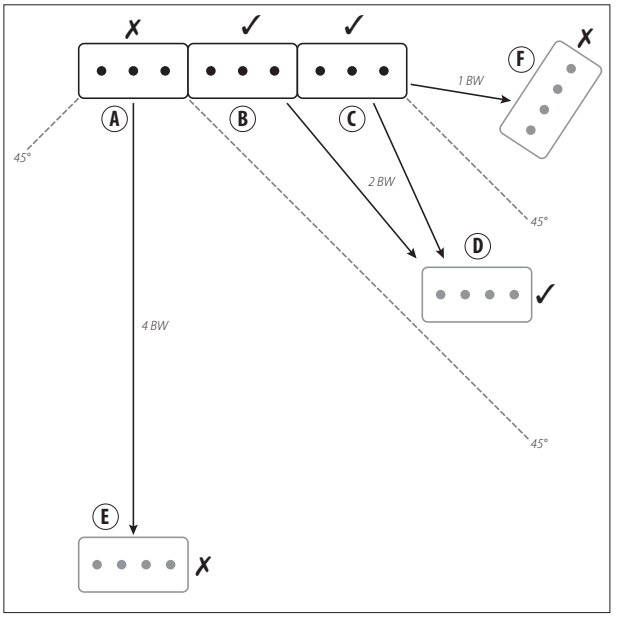
CONTACTING AND MOVING IN PROXIMITY TO THE ENEMY

A unit/group moving or starting a move anywhere within 1BW of an unengaged enemy is within the enemy unit's zone of control. If in an enemy's zone of control, a unit may only:

- Move to contact by the most direct line
- Move out of the 1BW zone of control, directly away from that enemy
- Stand

An enemy is unengaged if no opposing units are in base contact with it; once an enemy unit contacts the base, the zone of control no longer applies. When contacting an enemy, stop at the first point of contact, even if at an angle: combat will still occur without units being fully aligned.

1) Units A, B and C are Warriors and it is their Movement phase
2) Units B and C must make uncontrolled charges against Unit D unless they fail a Bravery test each
3) Unit A does not charge Unit D as it is outside of the 45° arc; Unit C does not charge Unit F for the same reason, even though it is closer than Unit D
4) Unit A does not contact Unit E as it is beyond Unit A's full movement. Even if Unit A moves closer this turn, it cannot move into contact with Unit E until next turn



OPTIONAL MOVEMENT RULE: LINE OF SIGHT CHARGES

If you find the ability to turn on the spot and contact a previously unseen opponent unlikely, try the following rule: if a unit can't see a unit at the start of it's movement (use the rules for uncontrolled charges to determine what a unit can see), it may still turn and contact that unit but does not gain the +1 die for moving into contact with an enemy, as the unit's charge has reduced impetus.

MOVING OUT OF CLOSE COMBAT

A unit must fight at least one round of combat, but if beginning its next movement phase in contact, some units are able to move out of combat if passing their movement Bravery test:

- Mounted can retreat from any Foot
- Foot Skirmishers may retreat from Shieldwall and Bow

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Units move individually to move out of contact; group moves are not allowed. Remember to follow the rules for moving in proximity to an enemy – these rules also apply when moving out of close combat.

Saxon Warriors with Cohesion dice and LPs. 15mm Strategia e Tattica on 6cm bases, painted by Simon Egan-Payne.

UNCONTROLLED CHARGES

Warriors and Warrior Companions will make uncontrolled charges, meaning they must move into contact with enemies they can see all of the closest base edge of anywhere directly in front of the charging unit's base or with 45 degrees directly in front, if they can contact them this move. Eligible units must make this movement unless they can fail their Movement Bravery test; this Bravery test is made by individual units rather than as a group, meaning that a group might split when making uncontrolled charges. The following rules apply:

- LPs may be used to help the unit fail (counter to the usual way LPs are used).
- If the player is happy for his unit to charge, no Bravery test is made.
- Uncontrolled charge target priority is the closest enemy unit it can contact.

Warrior units add 1BW to their maximum movement if this ends in contact with an enemy; therefore uncontrolled charges have a range of 3BW. All of your units making uncontrolled charges move simultaneously during their usual movement sequence (so all of your Warriors will charge at the same time), meaning that one unit making an uncontrolled charge at an enemy does not prevent other eligible units from making uncontrolled charges at the same target.

Playing tip: Use uncontrolled charges to your advantage: move your Warriors into a position where their uncontrolled charge will be triggered by enemy units. If fighting against a Warrior army, try to trigger their uncontrolled charges by using Skirmishers as bait, pulling the enemy Warriors into the jaws of a trap.

OPTIONAL MOVEMENT RULE: VARIABLE SUCCESS AND FAILURE

For a few extra surprises in your game, try the following:

- If you roll an unmodified 2 on your movement Bravery test, that unit/group may make one extra move, spurred on by battle lust. This second move may be used to contact an enemy if desired (Warriors may only add 1BW in total if moving to contact, rather than 1BW for each of the two moves).

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- If you roll an unmodified 12 on your movement Bravery test, that unit, or one unit in the group (chosen by the owning player) gets so confused or fearful that it's Cohesion automatically drops by 1. This can cause a unit to be destroyed.

UNIT STATS RELEVANT TO MOVEMENT AND BRAVERY TESTS

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Notes
Foot Companions (Warrior or Shieldwall)	2	10	Uncontrolled 3BW charge for Warrior Companions
Mounted Companions	4	10	
Noble Riders	4	9	
Cataphract Riders	3	9	
Ordinary Riders	4	7	
Noble Warriors	2	9	Uncontrolled 3BW charge
Ordinary Warriors	2	7	Uncontrolled 3BW charge
Noble Shieldwall	2	9	
Ordinary Shieldwall	2	7	
Mounted Skirmishers	4	8	
Foot Skirmishers	3	8	
Foot Bow	2	7	

CLOSE COMBAT
IN BRIEF

- All units halt at the first point of contact with an enemy – a unit can fight an enemy if in contact at any angle. Groups may split into individual units to make further contact.
- LPs may be used to add extra Aggression or to cancel out hits during close combat, but must be declared before any dice are rolled.
- If contacting more than one enemy, a unit decides which to attack (not necessarily the unit to its front) and whether to add any LPs to its own Aggression. Each unit (from both armies) may make one attack in a turn – this may be as a main attacker or in support of another unit.

Romano-Britons with Cohesion dice and LPs. 15mm Strategia e Tattica on 6cm bases, painted by Simon Egan-Payne.

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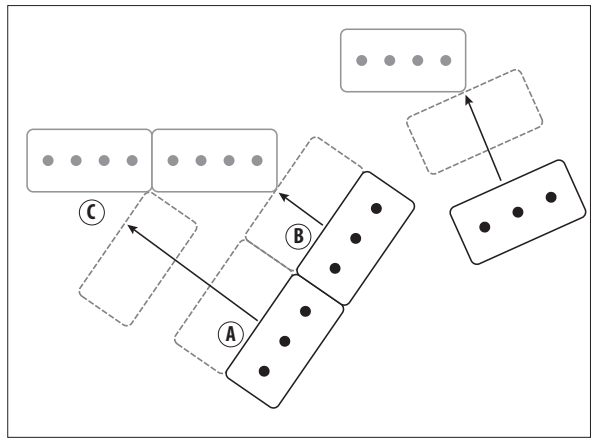
- When targets have been declared, all combat is resolved. The main attacking unit rolls a number of dice equal to its Aggression (plus modifiers), and cause a hit to the target's Cohesion for every die equalling or beating the target's Protection.
- Targets may use LPs to cancel hits inflicted during this combat, and subtract any remaining hits from their Cohesion. If Cohesion is reduced to 0 the unit immediately routs and is removed from the game.
- All combat outcomes are simultaneous.
- Non-routed losers retreat from close combat.



1) Unit A may choose to stay grouped with Unit B or move forward into combat with Unit C
2) If Unit A is a Warrior unit, it must move into combat with Unit C

Carefully planned tactics can come unstuck once battle lines meet: you'll find that Warriors will charge off to do their own thing when the enemy are near, carefully organised groups will fragment under the pressure of combat, and some well placed leadership in the shape of LPs can swing an evenly balanced melee. Bravery tests are not required for fighting a close combat.

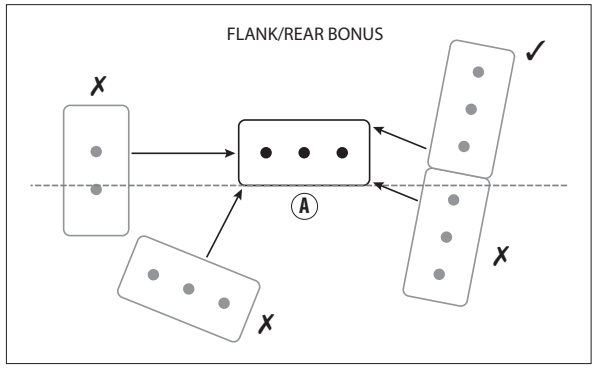
The close combat rules aren't intended to be a test of geometry or cunning; I've tried to provide guidelines for the most common situations that will arise, so if a situation arises not governed by the rules, the general mantra is:

- Roll more rather than less dice.
- Allow contact between enemies rather than preventing it.

CONTACTING ENEMY UNITS

When making contact with any part of an enemy unit, even just minimal corner contact, close combat will occur. The following rules apply:

- Units stop when they contact an enemy, so units fighting each other are often at an angle.
- If a group moves into contact from an angle rather than head on, individual units may break to continue moving their full distance if able to contact at least one other enemy unit by doing so; Warriors must do this, other troops may choose to. This is an exception to the rules for splitting groups during movement.
- If a unit has been contacted by an enemy on its own flank or rear it remains stationary for this turn, but may turn to face the attack in a subsequent turn if not engaged on other sides. This does not require a Bravery test and occurs during the unit's movement phase.
- Units making flank attacks must start their move from a point entirely behind the target's front line; rear attacks must start behind the target. Any other attack counts as a front attack even if hitting the target elsewhere, and continue to count as frontal attacks in subsequent turns.
- A unit gains extra Aggression if initiating combat by moving into contact with an enemy during the turn's movement phase, due to the impetus of its charge. If a unit has moved and is then contacted by an enemy, it doesn't qualify for this



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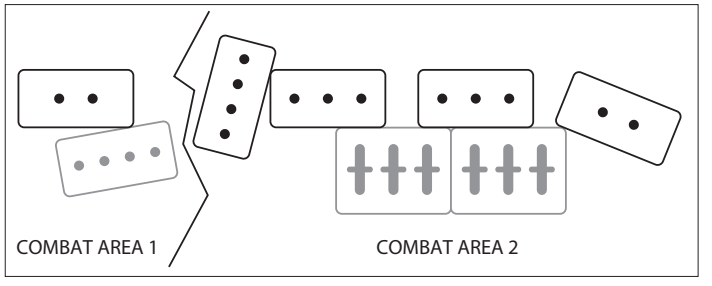
bonus, but if it joins a combat that's already underway (and fights as the main attacker), it does gain the bonus.

DECLARING ATTACKS AND USING LPS

Combat outcomes apply simultaneously, but you need to determine the order in which to declare and resolve attacks and spend LPs. Use the following sequence:

1. Determine combat areas: a combat area is a continuous chain of units from both sides who are in contact with an enemy. If all units/groups are clumped together, they may form one continuous combat area, or if contact has occurred in different areas of the battlefield, there may be more than one combat area.
2. Within each of those combat areas, the Aggressor must declare which enemy units his own attacks will be directed at (declaring both the main attacker and supporting units in multiple combats), and also allocates to units any LPs being spent on boosting that unit's Aggression or being set aside to cancel out any potential hits (declaring whether the LPs are being spent on attack or defence); the Repeller then does the same and the combat is then concluded following the procedure shown in the next section.
3. Move on to the next combat area



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and repeat step 2; the Aggressor chooses the order in which combat areas are fought.

4. Remember that all results count as simultaneous – if a unit is destroyed or retreats, any attacks or support it declared will still be resolved as though it were present in this turn's combat.

This sequence has been included to avoid players swapping the target of their attacks or use of LPs when they see what their opponent has chosen to do, which could result in a never-ending circle of changing targets before rolling any dice.

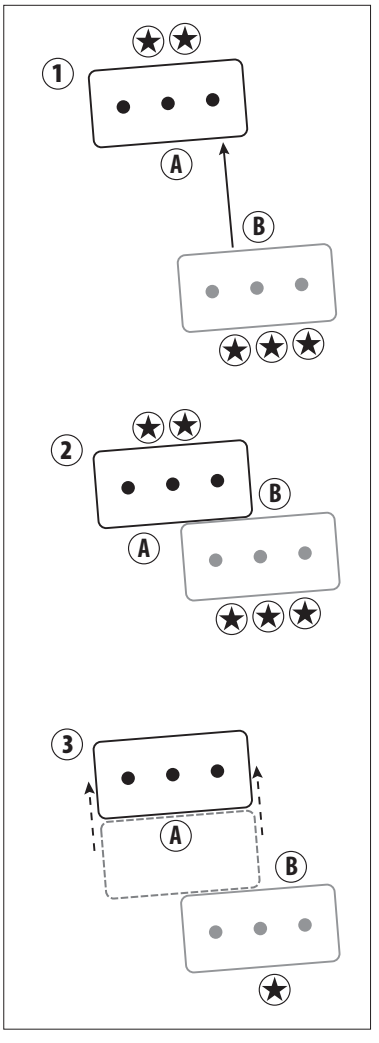
CLOSE COMBAT PROCEDURE

Once the order of resolving combat has been determined, follow the close combat procedure for all battles, remembering that all combat outcomes are simultaneous:

1. Both units roll a number of dice equal to their Aggression, adding extra dice as shown:

+2 if attacking a unit in its flank or rear
+1 if unit moves into contact this turn (may apply to units on both sides in multiple unit combat)
+1 additional bonus for cataphracts (and other units as noted) if moving into contact this turn
+ LPs (up to +3)
+1 for every supporting unit (up to +3)
–2 if Shieldwall, Shieldwall Companions, Riders, and Mounted Companions in close combat in area terrain other than hill
–2 if attacking uphill or attacking linear terrain
–2 if not a Skirmisher and attacking a target on your own flank or rear

2. The target number is the enemy's Protection.
3. Both units count the number of dice rolled equal to or higher than their Protection score. LPs set aside to cancel out hits before the dice were rolled may now be used to cancel out hits inflicted during this combat on a one-for-one exchange, up to a maximum of 3 per turn (no dice rolls required). Any outstanding hits are immediately removed from the target's Cohesion. Any LPs set aside for hits that do not get used remain unspent and are usable later in the turn if morale tests are required.
4. If either unit is reduced to 0 Cohesion, it routs and is immediately removed from the game as a casualty (reducing the player's LPs by 1 and possibly requiring morale tests at the end of the turn). If hits are inflicted but Cohesion remains above 0, note the new Cohesion scores for each unit, which applies until more hits are taken.
5. For each unit, compare the number of hits taken compared to the number of hits inflicted. If the number of hits is equal, both sides remain in contact. If a unit takes more hits than it inflicts but does not rout, it must retreat directly backwards a half BW (even if the unit is contacted on its flank), but still facing to its front. If friendly units are in the way, facing the same direction and not in close combat themselves, they are pushed back by the retreating unit the minimum distance required for the retreat to occur. If any other friends, enemy (including rear attacks), or linear or impassable terrain is in the way and blocks the retreat's full distance, the retreating unit stops after retreating as far as possible, deducting a further 1 Cohesion (which may lead to rout). Foot Skirmisher



1) Unit B passes a Bravery test and moves to contact Unit A. Unit A is the game's Aggressor and has 2 LPs. Unit B is the game's Repeller and has 3 LPs. Both are Ordinary Warriors

2) Unit B stops at the point of contact, initiating combat. Unit A declares 1 LP to boost Aggression and 1 LP for blocking hits. Unit B declares 1 LP for Aggression and 2 LPs for blocking hits. Unit A rolls Aggression 5 + 1 LP = 2, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5. Unit B rolls Aggression 5 + 1 LP + 1 for moving into contact = 1, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6, 6

3) Both units are Protection 5, so Unit A takes 4 hits and Unit B takes 1 hit. Unit B blocks that hit with an LP, leaving 1 LP in place unused. Unit A blocks 1 hit, but still takes 3 hits to its Cohesion of 5. Unit A must move backwards ½ BW

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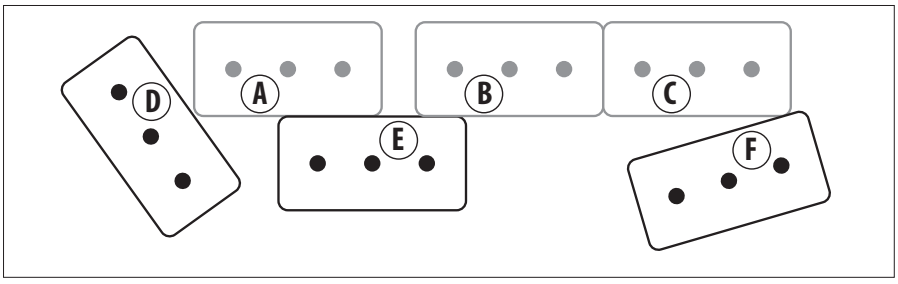


interpenetration rules apply for retreats, allowed them to pass through or be passed through by friends. A unit could potentially rout its opponent but still have to retreat if it received more hits than it inflicted.

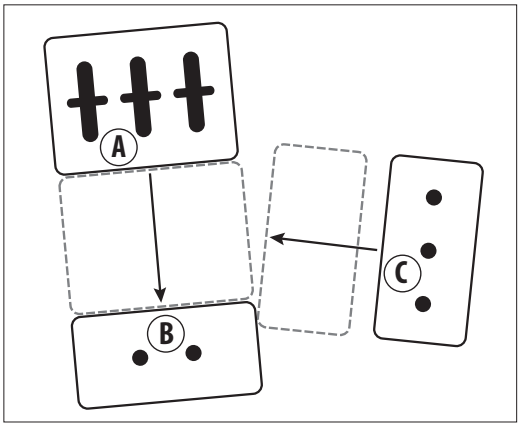
1) Units A, B and C are the game's Repellers; Units D, E and F are the game's Aggressors. All units shown are in one combat area
2) Aggressor declares LP use in this combat area, and his main attackers/ supports: Units D and E will fight Unit A with Unit D as the main attacker. Unit F can only fight Unit C
3) Repeller declares LP use in this combat area, and his main attackers/ supports: Unit A will fight Unit D, Unit B will fight Unit E, and Unit C may only fight Unit F. All are main attackers
4) All combats are resolved simultaneously. Note that Unit E will retreat backwards if Unit B inflicts at least two hits, regardless of hits caused on Unit A (because Unit E is a support)

Playing tip: Use LPs carefully in close combat. In a battle between two Shieldwall armies (where most troops will have low Aggression values), boosting an attack with extra LPs could be the difference between the swift defeat of an opposing Shieldwall and an on-going slogging match. Similarly, experiment with holding back some of the LPs allocated to a unit to cancel out hits – this is something many players forget to do, but it could make the difference between your Warriors breaking at first contact or standing up to even the most solid of Shieldwalls. And think about allocating LPs to your Companions: the extra dice used in attack makes them a powerful battering ram, and holding LPs back to cancel out hits can make Companions pretty invulnerable even when surrounded. Once you get stuck into close combat, you'll probably find you never have enough LPs to do everything you'd like to do!

OPTIONAL CLOSE COMBAT RULE: FOLLOW-UPS

To better represent the chaotic conditions of close combat in the Dark Ages, try this: Following stage 5 of close combat resolution, if a Warrior or Warrior Companion, or any Mounted unit has routed its opponent or forces it to retreat, it must move forward half a BW if there is space for it to move into. If the following-up unit's frontage is partially blocked by another unit, it will not follow-up. If it contacts any enemy or friend, it will stop on contact; no fighting takes place against enemies contacted during a follow-up, but the units will be in close combat for the following turn. A follow-up allows the unit to cross a linear feature if the unit is already in contact with that feature.

1) Unit B has moved already this turn, as it is a Skirmisher
2) Unit A moves into contact with Unit B, so gets +1 Aggression for doing so
3) Unit C then moves into contact with Unit A, so also adds +1 Aggression if it fights as the main attacker
4) Unit B does not gain +1 Aggression as, although it moved, it did not move into contact



MULTIPLE UNITS FIGHTING

If a unit is in contact with more than one enemy unit, it chooses which to attack, but can only attack one. A unit is not limited to fighting the enemy directly to it's front; although our miniatures are based on neat rectangles of card or plastic, each close combat represents a swirling, confused melee, and the spears, swords and shields of each of your units can be directed in whichever direction you choose (this is a departure from many other games, so be sure that you want to expose a unit to potential casualties before committing into close combat, even only as a flanking unit). However, if the unit it attacks is contacting the attacker's flank or rear, the attacker usually fights at –2 Aggression, so an enemy to your front is easier to fight.

For combats involving multiple units, it's a good idea to use the 'Declaring Attacks and Using LPs' sequence to smooth game play.

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If more than one of your units chooses to attack a single enemy:

- You must nominate one of your units as the main attacker, and your other units count as supporting. Each unit may only make one attack in a turn, either as a main attacker or as a support unit.
- You should usually nominate the unit with the highest Aggression as his main attacker, but sometimes, other factors mean that another unit is better placed to be the main attacker (such as a unit on the enemy's flank).
- The main attacker in any close combat may change from turn to turn – you need only nominate the main attacker for the turn you are currently playing.
- When you have decided which unit will be your main attacker, use that unit's Aggression value to attack with; each other attacking unit adds +1 (up to a maximum of +3) and counts as a supporting unit.

Playing tip: Because of the way the close combat support rules work, Skirmishers are just as effective as any other troops when supporting another unit's attack. So in addition to using your skirmishers to harry the enemy with missiles, watch out for opportunities to charge them into a close combat to lend weight to a more powerful unit's attack.

A supporting unit:

- Claims no extra bonuses, only ever adding its +1 for support.
- May use LPs to cancel hits directed at it but not to boost Aggression.
- Does not gain bonuses for moving into contact, for terrain or other advantages shown on the combat procedure.
- May not support another or fight as a main attacker in another combat during this turn.
- Attacked by any enemy unit and taking at least two hits to its Cohesion must retreat as explained in point 5 of the combat procedure (regardless of the number of hits the supporting unit has inflicted itself). If the supporting unit takes 1 hit or no hits, it does not retreat.

Playing tip: If a unit acts as support when it could have directed its own attack elsewhere, and takes damage, it's likely to be forced to retreat. As a general rule, it's best to only support a friend if there's not an enemy unit of your own to attack.

The defending unit may choose to attack any single opposing unit, either the main unit or a supporting unit. No hits are inflicted on the other enemy units and they are not affected if the target unit is forced to retreat.

Playing tip: Remember that you do not have to fight back against the opponent's main attacker: you may target any unit in contact with you. If in doubt, focus on a unit to your front: the –2 modifier for fighting a unit on your flank or rear will weaken your attack.

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OPTIONAL CLOSE COMBAT RULE: FIGHTING TO THE FRONT

If you don't relish the uncertainty of being able to hit or be hit by any unit in contact, use the following priority rules:

- A unit must strike at one opposing unit contacting its front edge.
- If no opposing units are contacting your own unit's front edge, it must strike at an enemy on either flank, or at the rear if there are no flank attackers.

This gives a very different, more ordered style of close combat, which makes close combat outcomes more predictable.

UNIT STATS RELEVANT TO CLOSE COMBAT

Unit type	Aggression	Protection	Cohesion	Notes
Foot Companions (Warrior or Shieldwall)	6	6	6	
Mounted Companions	5	6	5	
Noble Riders	5	5	5	
Cataphract Riders	6	6	4	Extra +1 Aggression when moving into contact
Ordinary Riders	4	5	4	
Noble Warriors	6	5	6	
Ordinary Warriors	5	5	5	
Noble Shieldwall	4	6	4	
Ordinary Shieldwall	3	6	4	
Mounted Skirmishers	2	4	2	
Foot Skirmishers	1	4	2	
Foot Bow	2	4	3	

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ENDING THE TURN
IN BRIEF

- Check victory conditions and casualties.
- For each unit you've lost this turn, lose 1LP for the remainder of the game.
- If your army has suffered 50% or higher casualties of its original number of units (excluding Skirmishers from both calculations), it must take a morale test.
- If your army has suffered 75% or higher casualties of its original number of units (excluding Skirmishers again) or suffers this from the 50% morale test, it will automatically rout, ending the game after all morale tests are completed.
- If the game continues, collect up all of your LPs ready to use again next turn.
- Start the next turn if neither army has routed from the battle.

Late Roman tanks! 15mm Essex Miniatures Cataphracts.

In this phase of the turn, check to see if any specific scenario victory conditions have been fulfilled or if an army has taken enough casualties to take a morale test (see the next section). If the game does not end at this point, you must:

- Collect up all LPs still on the table, and return them to each player ready for the start of the next turn.
- Surrender 1 LP per unit you lost this turn (so if you had 6 LPs and lost 2 units in this turn, you would only have 4 LPs left). These are lost for the rest of the game.
- Remove all remaining LPs if your Leader is killed this turn; you may no longer allocate any LPs in the game.

Once this has been done, start the next turn of the game.

Playing tip: Although Skirmishers don't count towards losses for morale tests, they still cost you LPs at the end of the turn they're lost in... so think twice about putting them in danger. This represents the loss of any unit being seen as a tactical setback for your army – although the loss of skirmish units won't have a significant effect on your army's morale, any unit routed from the battle demonstrates your enemy's prowess or your own leader's failure, leading to a reduction in LPs.

ENDING THE GAME: WINNING AND LOSING
IN BRIEF

- The game will end if either player has achieved the victory conditions of the scenario
- The game will end if an entire army has been destroyed or fled from the battlefield having failed a morale test

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A battle will draw rapidly to a close when a scenario's victory conditions have been met, or when either army has sustained heavy casualties:

- When your army has lost 50% or more of its original number of units (excluding Skirmishers from both calculations), each unit/group must test its morale in the end phase of that turn and every future turn.
- When your army has lost 75% or more of its original number of units (excluding Skirmishers again), the remaining units automatically rout in this phase.
- If your army reaches 75% casualties as a result of another morale test in this phase, the army will rout as above.

An army starting with an odd number of units rounds this number up when determining 50% and 75% casualties.
When one or both armies rout or fulfil their victory conditions, determine the game's winner:

- If your opponent's army has routed from the battle and you still have units on the battlefield after passing any morale tests your army needs to, you have won the game.
- If you have fulfilled the victory conditions of the scenario you're playing and your opponent has not, you have won the game.
- If both armies rout in the same turn, or a scenario with a set number of turns ends with both armies still on the table, the winner is the army with most Cohesion points left on the table after all units failing their morale tests have been removed; if these are equal, the battle is a draw, leaving the winner to be decided by heroic poetry and future historians (you'll have to make your own rules up for these!).

TESTING MORALE

When an army has lost 50% or more of its units (excluding Skirmishers), each unit must test its morale individually. This is a Bravery test taken in the end phase of all future turns of the game including this one. Any unit failing this test is automatically removed as routed.

If a unit still has LPs on the table at the start of the end of turn phase, you may use them to assist this Bravery test.

Skirmishers, who usually have a Bravery of 8, are reduced to Bravery of 6 for morale tests – they're not going to hang around when the going gets tough!

UNIT STATS RELEVANT TO MORALE TESTS

Unit type	Bravery
Foot Companions (Warrior or Shieldwall)	10
Mounted Companions	10
Noble Riders	9
Cataphract Riders	9
Ordinary Riders	7
Noble Warriors	9
Ordinary Warriors	7
Noble Shieldwall	9
Ordinary Shieldwall	7
Mounted Skirmishers	6 for Morale
Foot Skirmishers	6 for Morale
Foot Bow	7

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ARMY LISTS AND EXTRA RULES

ARMY LISTS

Choosing the army you wish to collect and deciding on its composition is a game in its own right. You need to ensure that your army isn't too small in numbers to be swept aside by a less well-equipped yet vast horde, but also include enough powerful units to give your army real punch.

The sample army lists near the front of the book serve as useful inspiration if you're just getting started; if you already own one or more Dark Ages armies, you should find that you already have suitable miniatures available and based to represent your chosen army in *Dux Bellorum*. You may choose units adding up to the total Army Points allowed by the scenario; you don't have to spend all of your Army Points, but if you don't spend them you're wasting precious points of military muscle.

Unless otherwise noted in the army lists, a choice of troop type noted as 'or' means that a mixture of units from both troop types may be selected, up to an overall total of the maximum shown (so 0–2 Noble Riders or Shieldwall could be 2 Noble Riders, 2 Noble Shieldwall, one of each, only one, or neither). A slash indicates the player must choose one of those types only, and the few instances where 'OR' is capitalised means the players must choose from only one side of this divider. Where a choice of missile weapons is offered, choose one for each unit; not all units in your army need to be given the same choice.

Where an army is offered the choice of Warrior or Shieldwall units, this often represents the difference between the armies of the smaller, freshly emerging but disorganised post-Roman kingdoms (Warriors) and later armies of the larger, more organised kingdoms emerging later in this period (Shieldwall). Some players might also feel that one or other option better represents their vision of Dark Ages warfare – the organised, solid shieldwall or the wild charging mob; or perhaps the difference between Christian and pagan societies.

Remember that you may use Army Points to purchase LPs:

Army's starting LPs	Cost in Army Points
6	0
7	2
8	4
9	7
10	10

Playing tip: A battle between two opposing Shieldwall armies can turn into quite a slugging match, and winning requires careful use of your army's LPs. I'd recommend that beginners avoid a clash between two Shieldwall-heavy armies until they've played a few games and fathomed out the best way to use LPs.

EARLY, MIDDLE AND LATE ERA GAMES

Most players want to fight against a reasonably authentic opponent, so use the following army selector to find a historically matched opponent; your opponent should come from the same period as your own army. I recommend using this but it's not essential for a fun, playable game. If allies are selected, they must be from an army list of the same period, and some strategies and tactics may only be chosen in certain eras.

The dates are approximate cut offs rather than exact! The beauty of this period is that any army can fight any other, even an army of the same culture as

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wars between rival warlords were very common throughout these centuries. Even Late Roman armies were not averse to having a pop at each other.

Army	Early period (before AD 450)	Middle period (AD 450 to AD 600)	Late period (after AD 600)
Late Roman	Yes		
Romano-British	Yes	Yes	
Welsh Warrior	Yes	Yes	Yes
Welsh Shieldwall			Yes
Saxon Warrior	Yes	Yes	Yes
Saxon Shieldwall			Yes
Irish	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pictish Warrior	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pictish Shieldwall			Yes
Land Raider	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sea Raider	Yes	Yes	Yes

RECRUITING ALLIES

Each army has a list of potential allies. You may include allies in your army, abiding by the following rules:

- Allies may only be selected from one allied army
- Allies may not include allied Companions
- Only 0–1 Skirmish units may be recruited from allies
- Any selection of Noble or Ordinary units may be recruited
- Allied units count towards your Army Points total
- Allies must be selected from an army of the same era

1. LATE ROMAN

The Late Roman army was very different to its proud predecessors: although still formidable on its day, the majority of troops were no better armed or experienced than Rome's enemies (in fact, plenty of Late Roman units were formed from just such 'barbarians'). This list best represents Comitatenses (the better trained, mobile field army); if you wish to represent a Limitanei army of border guards, remove the Noble Shieldwall, Noble Riders, and Cataphracts, and replace them with the Levied Troops strategy.

Aggressor Rating: 0 Leadership Points: 6–10	
1	Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–1	Noble Riders (superior cavalry) @ 5 points
0–1	Cataphract @ 6 points
0–2	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
0–2	Noble Shieldwall (superior infantry) @ 5 points each
0–6	Ordinary Shieldwall @ 3 points each
0–2	Bow @ 3 points
0–1	Mounted Skirmisher (Bow) @ 2 points
0–1	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points
0–2	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

- **Allies: Up to 6 points of the army may come from one of the following lists: Welsh, Saxon (Warriors).**
- **No Foot Companion option.**
- **2 pieces of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Assassination, Dismount, Experienced Warlord, Hurled Weapons, Imposing Horsemen, Javelins, Levied Troops, Swift Deployment, Veterans.**

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2. ROMANO-BRITISH

The Romano-British are known to wargamers by several names: Arthurians, Sub-Roman British, and Post-Roman British; these are the armies of the British successors to Roman authority. Mostly located in the southern and western lowlands of Britain, and based around a crumbling town and villa society, these armies were nonetheless probably quite rich in equipment and defended their Roman heritage far better than they're often given credit for: Romano-British society was still going strong in some areas well into the 6th century, far longer than many Roman successors on the continent.

Aggressor Rating: +1 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–3	Noble Riders or Shieldwall @ 5 points each
0–4	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
0–9	Ordinary Shieldwall @ 3 points each
0–1	Bow @ 3 points
0–1	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points each
0–2	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

- **Allies: Up to 6 Army Points may come from one of the following lists: Saxon, Welsh, Irish; Late Roman.**
- **If Foot Companions are chosen they must be Shieldwall.**
- **2 pieces of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Dismount, Experienced Warlord, Hurled Weapons, Imposing Horsemen, Javelins, Levied Troops, Loyal, Monks, Swift Deployment, Veterans.**

3. WELSH

This list represents those British and Welsh kingdoms continuing to live in non-Roman fashion, mostly in modern Cornwall, Wales, and 'The Men of the North' from the Scottish borders. Although perhaps considering themselves Roman in culture, these tribal societies had more in common with their Pictish and Irish counterparts than the imperial organisation of Rome. Under the leadership of Cadwallon in the mid-7th century, the Welsh of Gywnedd came close to expelling Saxon power from northern England (with the help of pagan Saxon allies).

The longbow of medieval Welsh armies was not used in this period;

Welsh warband. 28mm Gripping Beast, painted by James Morris.

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Riders and Warriors were probably the most common units in the upland areas controlled by these armies.

Aggressor Rating: +2 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–2	Noble Riders or Warriors/Shieldwall @ 5 points each
0–5	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
0–9	Ordinary Warriors/Shieldwall @ 3 points each
0–2	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points each
0–4	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

- **Allies: Up to 6 Army Points may come from one of the following lists: Romano-British, Saxon, Irish, Pictish.**
- **An army must be either a Shieldwall or Warrior army – a combination is not allowed. Allies are excluded from this.**
- **If Foot Companions are chosen, they must be Warrior or Shieldwall to match the rest of the army.**
- **3 pieces of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Assassination, Champion's Challenge, Dismount, Experienced Warlord, Hurled Weapons, Imposing Horsemen, Javelins, Levied Troops, Loyal, Mead, Monks, Stampede, Veterans.**

4. SAXON

The Saxons – a kaleidoscope of northern European and Scandinavian peoples including Saxons themselves, Angles, Jutes, Frisians, and others – had a chequered history of both serving and warring with the Late Roman empire. Initial piratical raids gave way to south and east coast settlement in the 5th century, and it seems likely that groups of noble Saxon warriors forged their own kingdoms and bulked their armies out with British subject warriors. Over the course of the 6th and 7th centuries, lowland Britain was conquered by a patchwork of small Saxon kingdoms, growing in influence and power through the 8th century – only to discover the taste of their own 4th and 5th century medicine from Viking raiders at the very end of our period.

Saxon cavalry are back in vogue and I believe that a good argument can be made for their inclusion in an army list of this period; if you see your Saxons purely as foot-sloggers, avoid using horsemen in your army.

Expect the unexpected – Saxon Noble Riders! 28mm Crusader Miniatures and Gripping Beast painted by James Morris.

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Saxon Noble Warriors. 28mm Gripping Beast, Black Tree Design, and Musketeer Miniatures painted by James Morris.

Saxon Warriors may be based as Shieldwall, due to their classification in some other wargames; either basing is fine, so long as your opponent knows whether they're up against Warriors or Shieldwall.

Aggressor Rating: +3 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–2 and 0–1 OR 0–3	Noble Riders @ 5 points each Noble Warriors/Shieldwall @ 5 points Noble Warriors/Shieldwall @ 5 points each
0–9	Ordinary Warriors/Shieldwall @ 3 points each
0–2	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each
Special rules: • **Allies: Up to 6 Army Points may come from one of the following lists: Welsh, Irish.** • **An army must be either a Shieldwall or Warrior army – a combination is not allowed. Allies are excluded from this.** • **If Foot Companions are chosen, they must be Warrior or Shieldwall to match the rest of the army.** • **2 pieces of terrain when defending.** • **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Assassination, Champion's Challenge, Experienced Warlord, Fanatics (Early and Mid), Hurled Weapons, Imposing Horsemen, Javelins, Levied Troops, Loyal, Mead, Veterans, War Dogs.**	

5. PICTISH

The Picts, based in modern Scotland, fought off the Romans, the Britons, the Saxons, and for a long time the Irish, and still found time to raid south into the British lowlands. From time to time the Picts seem to have aligned themselves with Irish or northern British/Welsh armies, and probably fought between themselves as frequently as they fought outsiders. There's no solid evidence for the tattoos Picts are famed for, but that shouldn't stop you enjoying this unusual looking army full of ragged, hairy spearmen with square shields and darting light horsemen.

The low numbers of Nobles and higher number of Skirmishers reflects the relative low wealth and home terrain of Pictish armies, which most likely encouraged skirmishing warfare, and also allows for the Aberlemno

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Pictish warband. 28mm Foundry and Gripping Beast, painted by James Morris.

Stone's generally accepted interpretation that later Pict armies fought in tighter Shieldwall formations.

Aggressor Rating: +2 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–1	Noble Riders or Warriors/Shieldwall @ 5 points each
0–2	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
0–9	Ordinary Warriors/Shieldwall @ 3 points each
0–4	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points each
0–4	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

- **Allies: Up to 6 Army Points may come from one of the following lists: Welsh, Irish.**
- **An army must be either a Shieldwall or Warrior army – a combination is not allowed. Allies are excluded from this.**
- **If Foot Companions are chosen, they must be Warrior or Shieldwall to match the rest of the army.**
- **3 pieces of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Assassination, Champion's Challenge, Dismount, Experienced Warlord, Fanatics (Early and Mid), Hurled Weapons, Javelins, Levied Troops, Loyal, Mead, Stampede, Veterans, War dogs.**

6. IRISH

Irish pirates were raiding the western British coast long before the Romans left. They settled along the west coasts of modern England, Wales and Scotland when Roman power declined, and fought against local armies in these areas. Often portrayed a technologically backward in warfare, Irish armies nevertheless proved to be formidable foes. Like the Saxons, it has often been suggested that the Irish made no use of mounted warriors other than to transport them to the battlefield; as with the Saxons in Dux Bellorum, Irish armies are offered a mounted option but will never be able to deploy as a 'cavalry-heavy' army. Chariots are offered as a special rule (see strategies and tactics).

The high number of Nobles in an Irish army reflects the warrior elite of a culture faced with endemic warfare; Irish Nobles need not be

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Irish warband. 28mm Gripping Beast, painted by James Morris.

well armoured, making up for the potential paucity of equipment with experience and guile on the battlefield. Riders would be classed as Nobles in other armies, but Irish horsemen were likely to be less well equipped than their adversaries, lacking the necessary 'clout' of Noble Riders.

Aggressor Rating: +3 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–4	Noble Warriors @ 5 points each
0–2	Ordinary Riders @ 3 points
0–9	Ordinary Warriors @ 3 points each
0–1	Mounted Skirmishers (Javelin) @ 2 points
0–5	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

Allies: Up to 6 Army Points may come from one of the following lists: Welsh, Saxon, Pictish.

- **If Foot Companions are chosen, they must be Warriors.**
- **Irish skirmishers choosing bows should be modelled with slings.**
- **If Chariots are selected, other Mounted cannot be.**
- **3 pieces of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Assassination, Champion's Challenge, Chariots (Early), Experienced Warlord, Javelins, Levied Troops, Loyal, Mead, Monks, Stampede, Swift Deployment, War Dogs.**

7. LAND RAIDERS

This army represents the raiding forces put together by any of the parent lists with the exception of the Late Romans, who may not field a Land Raider force. The composition of a land raiding army is based in part on the heroic poetry of the period (especially those poems of the Welsh and Irish), and also on the medieval raiding armies of the Scottish and Welsh borders. Horses are often available, and the army chooses to travel and fight light: no Shieldwalls here, even if the parent army is Shieldwall-based.

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Late era Land Raiders. 28mm Crusader Miniatures Scots.

Raiders are well-equipped and experienced fighters, hence the higher number of Noble units than in some parent armies.

Aggressor Rating: +5 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot/Mounted Companions with Leader @ 5 points
0–4 and 0–2 OR 0–4 and 0–2	Noble Riders @ 5 points each Ordinary Riders @ 3 points each Noble Warriors @ 5 points each Ordinary Warriors @ 3 points each
0–3	Mounted Skirmisher (Javelin) @ 2 points each
0–4	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each
Special rules: • **No allies.** • **If an army is all Mounted or all Foot, the Companions must be of the same type as your Warriors/Riders choice.** • **If Foot Companions are chosen they must be Warriors.** • **Irish skirmishers choosing bows should be modelled with slings.** • **Saxon and Irish armies may contain only 0–1 Mounted Skirmishers rather than 0–3; they can both choose Riders without restriction.** • **1 piece of terrain when defending.** • **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Champion's Challenge, Chariots, Dismount, Experienced Warlord, Fanatics, Imposing Horsemen, Javelins, Mead, Stampede, Swift Deployment, Veterans, War Dogs. These may only be chosen if available on the parent list.**	

8. SEA RAIDERS

Each and every army listed in this book, with the exception of Late Romans, can be the parent army for this list – a boat trip and bit of duty-free slave raiding was a popular vacation in this period! Saxons, Picts, and Irish warriors nibbled away at Late Roman and post-Roman Britain,

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and British warriors raided into Ireland (in a quaintly British way, St Patrick wrote a letter of complaint to a British king about such activities). In folklore, even the mighty Arthur was noted as raiding by sea. At the very end of our period, a Sea Raider army can be used to represent the ever-popular Viking pirates who had started to harangue kingdoms in the British Isles (use Early Saxon strategies and tactics).

This army has just got its feet wet, heading inland in search of booty and banditry. As seems appropriate for the sort of chap drawn to piracy, a high proportion of the army can be well armed and highly motivated Noble Warriors.

Aggressor Rating: +5 **Leadership Points: 6–10**	
1	Foot Companions with leader @ 5 points
0–4	Noble Warriors @ 5 points each
0–3	Ordinary Warriors @ 3 points each
0–4	Foot Skirmisher (Javelin or Bow) @ 1 point each

Special rules:

- **No allies.**
- **Foot Companions must be Warriors.**
- **Irish skirmishers with bows should be modelled with slings.**
- **1 piece of terrain when defending.**
- **0–3 Strategies and tactics: Ambush, Champion's Challenge, Experienced Warlord, Fanatics, Javelins, Mead, Swift Deployment, Veterans, War Dogs. These may only be chosen if available on the parent list.**

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

When putting together your army, you might wish to buy yourself a little period flavour from the options shown below. These rules are all entirely optional, and should only be used if both players agree to it. You may purchase a maximum of three options from the following list, and only if noted under your army's strategies and tactics options:

AMBUSH

The player may leave a total of 0–3 units of Skirmishers, Warriors or Riders off table during the initial deployment phase. Once all other deployment has occurred, the ambushing units are placed on the table in their own deployment area. If both sides have ambushers, dice to see who deploys all of their ambushers before their opponent. 4 Army Points (in total) to deploy 0–3 Ambushers.

ASSASSINATION

Before set up, declare that you are making an assassination attempt. For it to succeed, roll two dice and score 11 or 12. If successful, your opponent suffers –3 LP for the game but may still field a unit of Companions with a (new) Leader. If rolling a total score of 5 or less, the attempted assassination was so easily foiled that your enemy gains +1 LP for the game for the fame they gained by slaying your assassin. This strategy cannot be chosen for the 'End of Reign' scenario. 4 Army Points to recruit a skilled knifeman.

CHAMPION'S CHALLENGE

After deployment but before the first turn, your army's champion may challenge the opposing champion to a duel. If refused, the opponent suffers –1LP for the game (Late Romans and Romano-Britons may ignore this challenge without effect). Both sides roll one die and the higher scorer's

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champion wins; the player issuing the challenge wins ties. The loser's army suffers –1 LP for the game. No units need to be moved on the tabletop to represent the duel. 3 Army Points to have a warrior in your army boastful enough to issue the challenge.

CHARIOTS

Iron Age British and Irish tribes used chariots, and there is debate regarding their eventual demise in Irish armies. I am not convinced that chariots were still used on the battlefield in our period, but if you wish to do so, you may add them to Early Irish armies. Chariots are based, move and act as Riders but must test for uncontrolled charges in the Mounted movement phase. If Chariots are selected, other Mounted cannot be. Model one chariot per base, but increase the depth to accommodate it. Early Irish armies may include Chariot Companions (counting as Mounted Companions), and may replace any or all Noble Warriors with Chariot units costing 5 Army Points each.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
Chariots	4	9	6	5	4	Irish only; Uncontrolled 4BW charge	5

DISMOUNT

Rider and Mounted Companion units may dismount to fight. This happens in the Movement phase; a Bravery test must be passed, and the dismount takes place instead of any movement. A group may all be commanded to dismount with just one Bravery test. A unit/group may only dismount if beyond all enemy units' full move distances and also beyond enemy missile fire distance. The unit dismounts as Shieldwall or Warriors to match the rest of the army, and retains any Noble/Companion designation. To represent a number of riders retiring from the battle to look after horses, each unit's Cohesion immediately drops by 1 point when it dismounts. A dismounted unit may not remount during the battle. 3 Army Points to allow all relevant Mounted units the option to dismount in the game.

Welsh Shieldwall with a cocky champion! 28mm Gripping Beast.

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EXPERIENCED WARLORD

The leader of the army has fought and won many battles before; he knows what he's doing and his warbands trust him. After all LPs have been laid for the turn, he may reallocate 1 of these LPs to another unit in his army. 2 Army Points to train your warlord.

FANATICS

Although I am unconvinced about the historical likelihood of such units, gamers might wish to use some of the wonderful 'berserker' miniatures available. Early and Middle Saxon, Early and Middle Pictish armies and Sea Raiders may add 1 Fanatic unit: this unit counts as a Skirmisher unit for grouping, movement, terrain, and losses, must make uncontrolled charges in the Skirmisher movement phase and may not test to avoid doing so, and must have at least 1LP allocated to it in each turn of the game; LPs cannot be used to block hits on Fanatics. They contact enemies with an additional +1 die, and are based as Warriors. 5 Army Points to keep them in hallucinogens, furs and beauty products.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
0–1 Fanatics	3	12	7	4	3	Uncontrolled 3BW charge; extra +1 Aggression when moving into contact; Skirmishers; 1LP minimum per turn	5

HURLED WEAPONS

Using angones, javelins, and axes, Shieldwall units and Shieldwall Companions add +1 die when contacted from the front firing arc and not starting that turn already in contact with an enemy, but not when they themselves have moved into contact. All or none relevant units must use hurled weapons costing 3 Army Points for the whole army if 5 or less units are equipped in this way, or costing 5 Army Points if 6 or more units need equipping.

IMPOSING HORSEMEN

Mounted Companions and Riders in your army are mounted on continental warhorses rather than native British ponies, and possess extra armour or training. Yes, this is the option to take if you want to field 'King Arthur's Knights': historically accurate or not we all know they're fun to include. Imposing units contact enemies with an additional +1 die. Mounted Skirmishers and Cataphracts cannot be Imposing. All or none relevant units must be Imposing, costing 3 Army Points for the whole army if 5 or less units are equipped in this way, or costing 5 Army Points if 6 or more units need equipping.

JAVELINS

Riders, Warriors, and Warrior or Mounted Companions may use javelins; these have a range of 2BW and an Aggression of 1 (but no extra bonus for being within 1 BW). All or none relevant units must use javelins costing 3

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Army Points for the whole army if 5 or less units are equipped in this way, or costing 5 Army Points if 6 or more units need equipping.

LEVIED TROOPS

In troubled times, a Dark Ages leader might consider calling for a mass levy of non-professional warriors to appear as part of the army; this was outside the norm for this era, warfare being a specialized pursuit. Levied troops are classed as Ordinary Shieldwall, and between 8–16 Army Points must be spent on them. An army's Aggressor Rating drops by 2 points if Levy are included in the army as Levy are happier in defence of their kingdom rather than attacking across borders.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
4–8 Levy	2	6	2	5	3		2

LOYAL

1 Noble unit boosts its Bravery to 10 for the entire game; your warlord is lucky to have an extended family of kinsmen prepared to fight by his side and die with him. 3 Army Points to guarantee their loyalty!

Pictish Leader in Chariot. 28mm Gripping Beast.

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MEAD

Choose to indulge your army in a mighty feast before sending them into battle, making them braver yet more fragile! If this option is purchased, all units except for Skirmishers and Levy gain +1 Aggression for the game but –1 Cohesion. Expect a quick resolution to the battle. 3 Army Points to host the feast.

MONKS (OR OTHER RELIGIOUS BRETHREN)

The army has spiritual support, regardless of their Christian or pagan beliefs. Monks are deployed on the battlefield during the Foot deployment phase. While the Monks are in play, they deliver prayers and other spiritual support, allowing them to add 2 LPs to any one unit/group within 5BW of themselves during the usual LP placement phase (but may not exceed the usual 3 LPs per unit/group). No LPs may be spent on the Monks themselves, so they must rely on their own Bravery and divine dice intervention. Monks' LPs are independent of a Leaders', so are not affected if the Leader is routed. Monks are based on Shieldwall sized bases and count as Ordinary Shieldwall for movement and losses, although they may not join a group; their LPs are removed from play immediately if the Monks rout. 0–1 Monks at 3 Army Points for religious education and upkeep of the church.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
0–1 Monks	1	6	1	3	3	May not use LPs.	3

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STAMPEDE

If war dogs are a debatable addition to the game, war sheep (or cattle or pigs) are even more tongue in cheek although broadly relevant! There's a good account of the Welsh using this tactic at Trwstllewelyn in AD 1257, and the tactic feels right for the Dark Ages too. Counting as Foot Skirmishers for movement and grouping, Stampedes test for uncontrolled charges in the Skirmisher movement phase. A Stampede will automatically be removed from the game when contacting or contacted by any enemy, but reduces that unit's Cohesion by 2 points (Skirmishers are an effective sacrifice to make, if you can place them in the way). LPs cannot be used to cancel damage caused by a Stampede, and a Stampede may not be shot at. The loss of a Stampede does not lead to a loss of an LP. Place on Rider sized bases. 0–1 at a cost of 2 Army Points for shearing, herding, and Black Sabbath songs (War Pigs – forgive me that one!).

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
0–1 Stampede (cattle/ sheep/ pigs)	3	10	-	-	-	Act as Foot Skirmishers; uncontrolled 3BW charge.	2

SWIFT DEPLOYMENT

By mounting the entire force on ponies for transportation, or moving quickly by Roman roads or a well-placed beaching site, the army is more likely to catch it's opponent unprepared, adding +2 to its Aggressor rating for the game. 2 Army Points for the upkeep of roads, ponies, or boats.

VETERANS

1 Noble unit gains +1 Aggression for the entire game; these are the most experienced warriors in your army outside of your Companions, so use them with care. 3 Army Points for training and equipment.

WAR DOGS

I'm still to see any convincing evidence of dogs being used in Dark Ages British battles rather than just for hunting, but they are a popular addition to many wargamers' armies, so are included here in the interests of popularity if not accuracy. Place on Rider sized bases, and treat them as Foot Skirmishers for movement and grouping. War dogs test for uncontrolled charges in the Skirmisher movement phase. 0–2 at a cost of 3 Army Points for training and dog food.

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points
0–2 War dogs	3	10	5	4	3	Act as Foot Skirmishers; uncontrolled 3BW charge.	3

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SCENARIOS

Scenarios in *Dux Bellorum* can be as simple or complex as you wish; this section provides some typical Dark Ages scenarios to get you started plus ideas for devising your own clashes. We have the names of many Arthurian-era battles but very few fixed details, meaning you can create your own 'history' without being provably wrong!

Read through the earlier sections 'Getting ready to play' and 'Setting out the battlefield' for more on setting up a game. Battlefield layout within the scenarios has been left deliberately open to allow you to set the battlefield up according to the terrain you have available; the number of game turns might need some adjustment depending on your table size and layout.

Use the Annals Battle set up and guidelines for all battles unless noted as different in other scenario instructions. Your goal for the game is shown in the victory conditions.

ANNALS BATTLE

Documents such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and *Annales Cambriae* frequently mention battles by name and year but lack further details; this scenario can be used for such encounters. The most famous battles of this type are probably Badon (AD 516) and Camlann (AD 537), which tie into Arthurian legend. The goal for both sides is to rout their enemy's army.

- **Determining the Aggressor and Repeller:** See the earlier section 'Deployment and determining Aggressors and Repellers'.
- **Army Points:** 32 for both Aggressor and Repeller.
- **Terrain requirements:** Repeller lays terrain; no rivers, high walls or villages. Maximum one feature per table quarter.
- **Deployment:** Aggressor chooses which table edge to deploy along, using 'Deployment and determining Aggressors and Repellers' section; Repeller uses the opposite one. On oblong tables, the longer edges must be used.
- **Special rules:** None.
- **Maximum number of turns:** 18
- **Victory conditions:** Rout your enemy, or at the end of the final turn, have more Cohesion points left on the table than your enemy.

DAWN ATTACK

Catching your enemy off guard by launching an assault at dawn features in some Dark Ages battle accounts; examples include Catraeth (AD 600) which didn't go well for the early morning British attackers, and Strathcarron (AD 642) where Domnall Brecc's sleepy head was eventually pecked by ravens with his Irish army defeated by British enemies. This scenario sees the Aggressor trying to overwhelm the Repeller before a strong defence is organized – speed of attack may win or lose the battle.

- **Determining the Aggressor and Repeller:** The army with the most Mounted units is the Aggressor; if both sides have the same number of Mounted units, dice as per an Annals Battle.
- **Army Points:** 28 for the Aggressor and 32 for the Repeller.
- **Special rules:** In Turn 1, the Repeller may use only 1 of his LPs; in following turns, add an extra LP per turn until all are in play. The Aggressor deploys as usual, but the Repeller begins the game

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encamped and must deploy all of his units before the Aggressor does: the deployment zone is within the central third of the Repeller's baseline, up to 3 BW in from the baseline, and no terrain may be laid out in this area. When the defending units are deployed, the Aggressor may swap the location of up to two pairs of units. Each encamped unit must be deployed individually rather than grouped, and suffers –1 to Bravery tests in the first turn (as the troops gather their weapons and armour). Ambushes may not be used.

- **Maximum number of turns:** 14
- **Victory conditions:** If the Repeller has not routed at the end of the final turn, the attack is repulsed and the Repeller wins.

END OF REIGN

A warlord's life could be short and brutal, often ending on the battlefield. One sequence of events in the 7th century highlights this only too well: AD 633 at Hatfield Chase Cadwallon and Penda slay Edwin, AD 634 at Heavenfield Oswald slays Cadwallon, AD 642 at Maserfield Penda slays Oswald, and finally AD 655 at Winwaed Oswiu slays Penda. Phew! The aim of this scenario is to kill your opponent's Leader, with other casualties being almost irrelevant.

- **Special rules:** If your Leader is routed, your army automatically routs. In this scenario, no LPs may be spent blocking hits on your Companions.
- **Victory conditions:** Very simple: kill your opponent's Leader by routing his Companions unit. If one army routs before either Leader has been killed, the battle is considered a draw.

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RIVER BATTLE

Dark Ages battles frequently took place at rivers, presumably because they formed the boundaries of kingdoms and crossing points were well known and could be guarded; this scenario allows you to invade or repel at your kingdom's border to your heart's content. Examples include seven of the famous (if perhaps legendary) twelve battles of Arthur. The aim of this scenario is to cross the river and rout your enemy.

- **Terrain requirements:** Repeller lays terrain; must include a river running between two opposite table edges and one ford roughly halfway along the river's length (this river doesn't count towards the Repeller's terrain total). Maximum of one other terrain feature per quarter.
- **Special rules:** See terrain rules for the river and ford's effect.
- **Victory conditions:** If one side routs, it loses the game; if neither side has routed by the end of the final turn, the army with the closest non-Skirmish unit to the ford controls the river crossing and wins the battle – even if that army has taken more casualties.

VILLAGE RAID

This scenario is not based on a particular battle, but represents the type of encounter fought time and time again when one kingdom invades another. The Aggressor must try to occupy and hold the enemy village, while the Repeller tries to prevent him getting there or staying there.

- **Determining the Aggressor and Repeller:** If one army is a Raider army, it will be the Aggressor. If both or neither armies are Raiders, the army with the most Noble units is the Aggressor; if both sides have the same number of Noble units, dice as per an Annals Battle.
- **Terrain requirements:** Repeller lays the terrain; no villages, rivers, walls or high walls may be used. Once the Aggressor has chosen his table edge, the Repeller must deploy a village (which doesn't count towards the Repeller's terrain total) within 4BW of his own baseline. Maximum of one other terrain feature per quarter.
- **Maximum number of turns:** 12
- **Victory conditions:** If at least one unengaged Aggressor unit is in the village at the end of any turn, each Repeller unit must take an additional morale test. If neither side has routed by the end of the final turn, the Aggressor wins if he has at least one unengaged unit in the village; the Repeller wins with any other result.

SCENARIO IDEA: SIEGES

Some accounts of warlords besieged inside their forts or within a fortified town have emerged from the Dark Ages, such as the Saxon siege of Pevensey (AD 491). These were not sieges along medieval lines, with artillery or mining – Dark Ages sieges required the attackers to either starve out the defenders or go over the walls and through the gateways the hard way. The Aggressor must try to storm the fort with superior numbers, while the Repeller attempts to hold the fort at all costs.

The following ideas should help you play out such a scenario:

- Repeller is the army with the most Shieldwall, or if Shieldwall are equal, the least number of Nobles.

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- Repeller places High Walls in the centre of the table, with a village inside and 1–2 gateways. Suggested perimeter is 16–20 BW. Repeller must deploy inside the High Walls, but may move out during the game.
- Army Points: Aggressor has 32, Repeller has 20.
- Aggressor may buy ladders costing 1 Army Point per unit for as many Foot units as he wishes. Ladders allow High Walls to be crossed as Walls.
- Gateways may be crossed as ditches.
- No ambushes!

SCENARIO IDEA: THE BARD'S TALE

This is one of my favourite ways to play *Dux Bellorum*, not least because I can win by seeing my own army being wiped out; the type of battle represented here can be read about in the poetry of Taliesin and Aneirin. Each player's army is accompanied by a bard whose job it is to record the deeds of his army; the bard may be represented by a figure or a counter, and is treated as a marker in the game rather than a unit – other units may move through, shoot through, and in all ways ignore the bard (if necessary, move the bard out of the way of other units).

At the start of each turn before LPs are allocated, attach your bard to any one non-skirmish unit in your army. The bard follows that unit for the whole turn, and scores points according to the actions carried out by that unit. At the start of the next turn, your bard may choose to stay with the same unit or move to any other non-skirmish unit in your army (with no movement restrictions). If the unit the bard is attached to routs, the bard will survive and may be attached to another unit in the following turn.

Victory points are scored during each turn as follows:

- 1 VP for each point of Cohesion lost or caused this turn in close combat by the unit the bard is attached to (must be the main attacker, not in support). Missile fire does not count as it's not heroic enough!
- 3 VP if attached to the routing unit that causes your whole army or your opponent's whole army to rout.
- 3 VP if the unit the bard is attached to, or the unit it has fought this turn as the main attacker, routs this turn.
- 3 VP if attached to your leader when he is routed, or attached to the main attacker routing your opponent's leader.

The player with the most victory points at the end of the battle wins, regardless of whether his army routed or not. It's not about winning the battle, it's about carrying out the most heroic deeds (but only when a bard is close by!).

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DUX BELLORUM QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

TURN SEQUENCE

- Alternately place LPs (Repeller goes first).
- Missile fire (simultaneous outcomes). Reduce unit Cohesion as required.
- Move units/groups, testing Bravery for each unit/group.
- Close combat (simultaneous outcomes). Reduce unit Cohesion as required.
- Check morale and victory conditions, reduce LPs if necessary, and return all unused LPs to players.
- Start the next turn.

LEADERSHIP POINTS: ALLOCATION

- 1–3 LPs may be placed with a unit/group.
- You may not add more to the same unit/group later in this phase.

LEADERSHIP POINTS: USES

- May be spent on the whole group for Bravery tests, or on individual units for other uses.
- Interrupt an opponent's movement sequence.
- Boost (or reduce, in the case of uncontrolled charges) Bravery for a Bravery test taken this turn (max 3 LP per unit/group per Bravery test).
- Boost Aggression for close combat, but not for missile fire (up to all 3 LPs per unit).
- Cancel 1 hit caused this turn per LP spent (up to all 3 LPs per unit).

MISSILE FIRE

- Add up all Aggression directed at each target and roll a number of dice equal to this.
- The score needed to hit is equal to or higher than the Protection value of 5.
- Targets may use LPs to cancel hits inflicted during this combat, and subtract any remaining hits from their Cohesion. If Cohesion is reduced to 0 the unit routs and is removed from the game.
- Foot with bows may not voluntarily move later in the turn if they shoot in the missile phase.

+1 if the target is within 1 BW or shooting into the rear of the target (per unit firing)
–1 if missile target/shooter is in area terrain other than Bog, or if target is behind linear terrain other than River or Ditch/Stream (per unit firing). Do not count twice if both shooter and target are in such terrain.

MOVEMENT

- Make Bravery tests and move units/groups in sequence.
- Groups must be formed of the same troop type.
- Troop movement within 1BW of an enemy's front is restricted.
- Warriors must test for uncontrolled charges.

MOVE SEQUENCE

1. Aggressor's Skirmishers (Mounted and Foot)
2. Repeller's Skirmishers (Mounted and Foot)
3. Aggressor's Mounted
4. Repeller's Mounted
5. Aggressor's Foot
6. Repeller's Foot

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CLOSE COMBAT

- Halt at the first point of contact with an enemy. Charging groups may split into individual units to make further contact.
- LPs may be used to add extra Aggression or to cancel out hits during close combat, but must be declared before any dice are rolled.
- If contacting more than one enemy, a unit decides which to attack. Each unit (from both armies) may make one attack in a turn – as a main attacker or in support of another unit.
- The main attacking unit rolls a number of dice equal to its Aggression (plus modifiers), and cause a hit to the target's Cohesion for every die equalling or beating the target's Protection.
- Targets may use LPs to cancel hits inflicted during this combat, and subtract any remaining hits from their Cohesion. If Cohesion is reduced to 0 the unit immediately routs and is removed from the game.
- All combat outcomes are simultaneous.
- Non-routed losers retreat from close combat.

+2 if attacking a unit in its flank or rear
+1 if unit moves into contact this turn (may apply to units on both sides in multiple unit combat)
+1 additional bonus for Cataphracts (and other units as noted) if moving into contact this turn
+ LPs (up to +3)
+1 for every supporting unit (up to +3)
–2 if Shieldwall, Shieldwall Companions, Riders, and Mounted Companions in close combat in area terrain other than hill
–2 if attacking uphill or attacking linear terrain
–2 if not a Skirmisher and attacking a target on your own flank or rear

ENDING THE TURN

- For each unit you've lost this turn, lose 1LP for the remainder of the game.
- If your army has suffered 50% or higher casualties of its original number of units (excluding Skirmishers), it must take a morale test. If your army has suffered 75% or higher casualties of its original number of units or suffers this from the 50% morale test, it will automatically rout, ending the game after all morale tests are completed.
- If the game continues, collect up LPs ready to use again next turn.
- Start the next turn if neither army has routed from the battle.

WINNING THE GAME

- If your opponent's army has routed from the battle and you still have units on the battlefield after passing any morale tests your army needs to, you have won the game.
- If you have fulfilled the victory conditions of the scenario you're playing and your opponent has not, you have won the game.
- If both armies rout in the same turn, or a scenario with a set number of turns ends with both armies still on the table, the winner is the army with most Cohesion points left on the table after all units failing their morale tests have been removed; if these are equal, the battle is a draw.

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DUX BELLORUM ARMY ROSTER

ARMY: .....

ERA: .....

ARMY POINTS: .....

AGGRESSOR RATING: .....

LEADERSHIP POINTS: .....

50% CASUALTIES FOR MORALE TEST: .....

75% CASUALTIES FOR DEFEAT: .....

Unit type	Move	Bravery	Aggression (Missiles)	Protection	Cohesion	Notes	Points

SPECIAL RULES: .....

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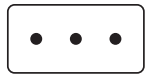

= Foot (2 figures for skirmishers, 3 or 4 for others)

= Mounted (2 figures for skirmishers, 3 for others)

= Leadership Points

= Unit/group identifier, placed to show the unit/group's front edge